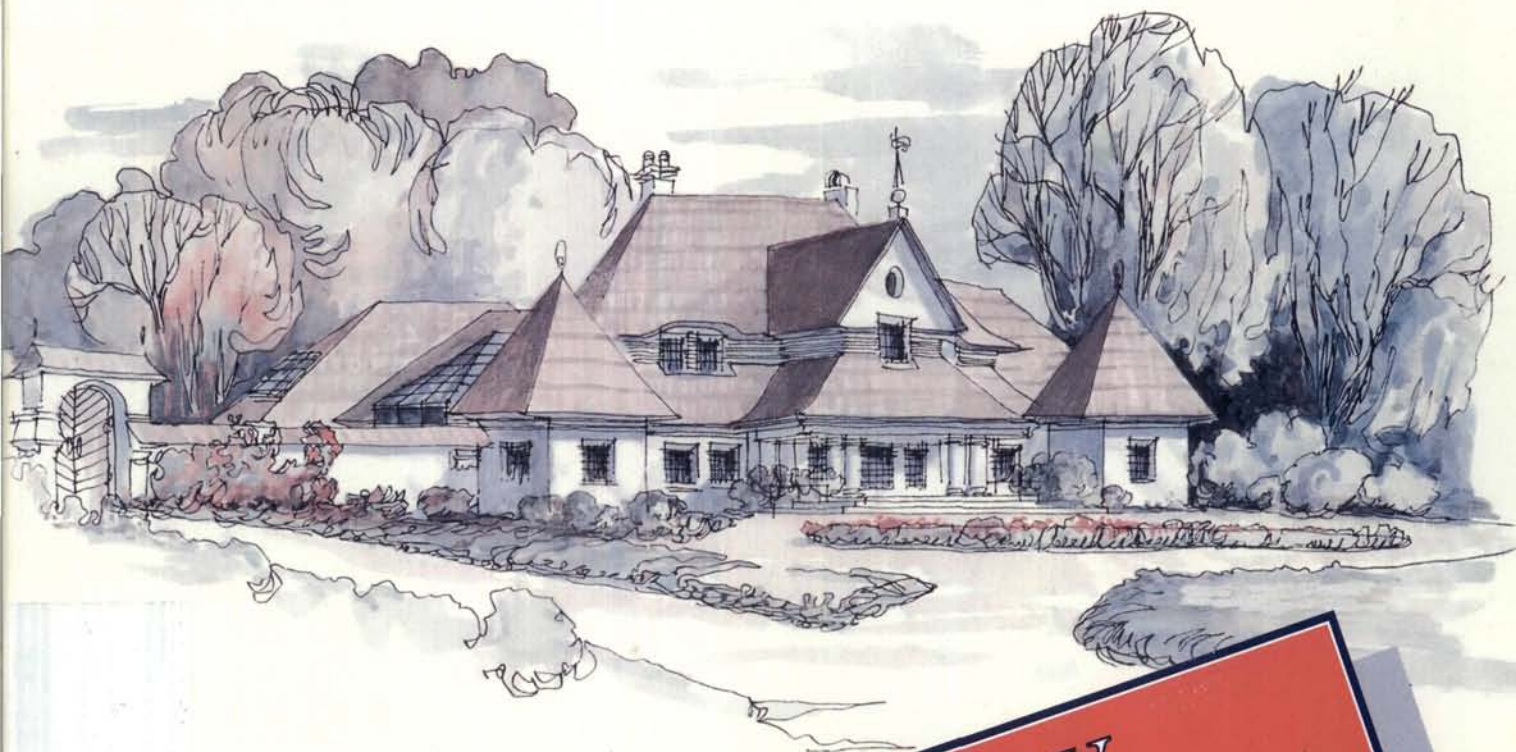


Chronicles

January 1994

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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Q:

How did you go about investigating (Arthur) Schlesinger's research?

A:

I took The Crisis of the Old Order and went through the Coolidge section line by line. I delved into the historical sources to see how Schlesinger's writing squared with the relevant historical documents. What I discovered was that Schlesinger's treatment was almost a complete caricature from beginning to end. Almost every sentence on Coolidge was questionable. I concluded that almost every sentence involved the deliberate or unconscious distortion of the historical record.

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On *Chronicles*

We young conservatives enjoy seeing Dr. Fleming take on the education establishment's sacred cows, but when you dismiss us as "clumsy ignoramuses," this hits too close to home. It is bad enough to read issue after issue of your magazine and then have to look up encyclopedia articles on a dozen or so names we've never come across: Cicero, Cervantes, Hume, Faulkner, etc. But then we need to get a book of Greek and Latin phrases just to understand the first and last lines of your essays. What are you trying to do—turn us into truly educated people?

Look, Fleming—we are pampered, selfish, and ignorant. But we like it this way. It makes life easy, and besides, we already thought of ourselves as somewhat "educated." After all, we were literate, we could write a persuasive essay (albeit with grammatical errors), and we knew far more than most young people our age. We considered ourselves the lucky victims of American educational decline. True, little was demanded of us in school. But this only left more time for us to do what we really loved—study exactly what we wanted whenever we wanted and become knowledgeable on a few topics (my own personal favorites were Christian history, conservative ideology, and the 1960's counterculture). All in all, we didn't consider it such a bad deal. Especially since we never had to take tests in any of these areas or seek out information that didn't confirm our point of view.

Then you come along with all these classical scholars and professors of medieval literature and tell us that we probably learned very little of what an educated person needs to know, even though we went to the best colleges in America, and that we are an educated elite fit for a Third World nation. Now, we just weren't ready for a sobering critique like this. We are your young allies of the right. We expected you to raise a clenched fist and shout along with us: "Peace through strength," "Family values," "Low taxes and high morals," "The preservation of Western culture." We consider it impudent that you would try to improve our minds and souls.

When you advertised all those back issues of *Chronicles* we were tempted by

such intriguing titles as "Conservatism as Novelty" and "The Cult of Deficient Thinking." Our bright but lazy minds were sure that you'd tell us all there is to know on these subjects. We had no idea how transforming your magazine can be. Eventually we wanted to read the Bible, not just a critique of why liberals don't respect it. We wished we had really payed attention when our professors taught the *Illiad* in Classics I. We could no longer feel superior to educated leftists by checking out old issues of the *Nation* and laughing at the ludicrous predictions. And those thousand and one pamphlets of the Heritage Foundation just didn't seem as exciting anymore.

We imagine you must get a great chuckle out of all of this. You know how long it will take us to catch up and the sensuous and frivolous pleasures we will miss out on in our attempt to make up for our deficient formal education. You also know that many of us will not succeed in our efforts and remain dolts. It is enough to make one read all 36 of Shakespeare's plays just to spite you.

But the most amazing thing is that you did all of this without being able to flunk us or ruin our résumés. Guidance counselors and academic advisors all over the country would probably kill to learn your secret. Why, the other day while in a bookstore I found myself foregoing political magazines for an introductory *Latin Made Simple* workbook, with special sections on the history of Latin and Latin phrases in everyday usage. The damn thing is so intriguing I can't even have the pleasure of resenting you while I study it. I'll bet you had this planned all along, didn't you? You are a cruel man, Thomas Fleming.

—Mary C. Stack
Brooklyn, NY



“REAL LIFE” CRIME shows are the latest rage on American television. Feeding on this fury, there is now for sale an encyclopedia of crime, where one can examine the “true stories” of deranged persons like Jeffrey Dahmer. The first book in the series is titled *Serial Killers* and was out in time for last Christmas. Anything dangerous, destructive, or (best of all) perverse seems these days to have a series devoted to it, and a willing and waiting audience. There are shows that follow real police officers around as they corner criminals—the latter often of the hard-bitten drug dealer or titillating prostitute variety. The entire spectrum of tragedy, criminal or accidental, that can befall one is now grist for the media mill. New shows seem to be appearing every day, each offering a glimpse of a world that is dark and horrifying.

The thrust of many of these oftentimes lurid productions is that disaster and terror can afflict anyone, at almost any time. Taken collectively, and including the proliferating talk shows and news programs, these broadcasts create a climate of fear, and the trust that should exist between neighbors and friends dissolves. Even a loved one could be a maniacal killer, the shows instruct us, and trusting someone else is putting your life in his hands. Having trustworthy relatives is not even a sure guarantee against disaster, as the several “rescue” shows now on television, which concentrate on purely natural disasters, attest.

On the one hand, perhaps some good is served by these broadcasts. Americans have lived too long in wealth and safety and have forgotten how precarious is humanity’s physical existence. Having dispensed with every sort of instruction that attempted to explain the facts of tragedy and violence in terms of parables and moral truths (such as the Bible, McGuffey’s readers, and traditional fairy tales), a gap needs to be filled, and there is a chance that these shows provide a partial remedy. But, due to the media’s own moral ambiguity, it is doubtful whether these shows will have any lasting positive effect. For although seeming to disapprove of criminal behavior, the genre is supported by human evil and thrives on the violence-addicted nature of its audience. It is not surprising, therefore, that these shows claim to provide nothing more than entertainment

or “information.” It is not easy to disregard one’s benefactor.

What redeeming value there is in the new breed of “true crime” shows is evident in one of the oldest of the genre, *America’s Most Wanted*. This show has somewhat revived the American tradition of vigilantism. More than 200 criminals have been apprehended due to the exposure their crimes have received. But again the message is mixed; the difference between the hunters and the hunted becomes muted and fluid. The criminal could be a father, brother, sister, trusted friend, or any other in whom people might place their confidence. While one episode might showcase the activities of fearless police officers collaring the bad guys, another features cops on a rampage, abusing their authority and taking advantage of those whom they are supposed to protect.

Another facet of this fury is evidenced by a show that has aired for several years now but has only recently gained a sizable following. The show is *American Gladiators*, and for the first time last year, action figures of the show’s major participants were marketed as Christmas presents, a sure sign of popularity (as well as decadence). This program combines all the violence of the “true crime” shows with none of the actual pain, although even in the crime shows almost all of the criminal and violent acts are “simulations.” In *Gladiators*, two contestants compete against each other and the gladiators in a variety of pseudomar-

tial events. The gladiators bear such names as “Gold,” “Gemini,” “Star,” and the like. Their outfits, both male and female, are suitably revealing to satisfy the appetite of the crowd, which is adolescent in both age and maturity.

Mixing violence with sensuality is nothing new, of course, and Richard Weaver long ago explained that the rise of sensational journalism is always the result of “man’s loss of points of reference, [of] his determination to enjoy the forbidden in the name of freedom.” In times past, a Legion of Decency could be depended upon to preserve some sort of standards and to keep a watch for egregious breaches of public morality. But these days, those who would protest are silent; what is worse, apparently the general populace does not see anything wrong in letting their own children (mostly boys and young men) watch scantily clad men and women cavort for an hour. As St. Cyril of Jerusalem put it in the fourth century: “Be not interested in the madness of the shows, where thou wilt behold the wanton gestures of players, carried on with mockeries and all unseemliness.” Now, it seems, such madness is relished.

No wild animals or devoured Christians are in attendance as of yet, and no one actually gets hurt, a situation which reveals a certain amount of cowardice and squeamishness on the part of the viewers. At least the Romans had the stomach to watch real violence; we are satisfied with heavily padded yet lightly

LIBERAL ARTS

NIPPON’S DIRTY LAUNDRY

“Buru-sera,” or girls’ used underwear, has long been available in Tokyo porn shops, but now it is for sale in vending machines in the city’s suburbs. “Buru” approximately means bloomers, and “sera” refers to the sailor-style uniforms that Japanese girls wear in junior high and high school. At least 20 shops in Tokyo buy the uniforms and used underwear of teenage girls, the *Mainichi Daily News* reports.

Thousands of Tokyo suburbanites have signed petitions seeking the removal of the dirty-laundry machines. While the government prohibits the sale of uncensored pornographic magazines and videotapes in the area, a suburban official says he “never anticipated the question of women’s secondhand underwear coming up.”

clothed “warriors” shooting tennis balls at one another. A democratic touch is added to the show by the contestant interviews, wherein we learn that most of the contestants are just normal folk, trying to get along. No one seems to have reflected upon the irony of providing “gladiatorial” games, no matter how ersatz, in what is supposed to be a republic.

Perhaps it is better to think of this new trend as looking not back to a pagan past but forward to a hi-tech future. The literature of science fiction has long had as a staple feature the idea that in the future man himself will become the object of sport. Indeed, these latter-day gladiatorial contests resemble nothing so much as the video games with which children spend so much of their time. Both glorify senseless violence with no recognition of either the pain or the loss of life involved. At least the pagans had a sort of innocence; their moral code, while perhaps not complete, was coherent. In a world entering what has been called a “post-Christian” era, innocence is no excuse, and so we are left with just plain moral disintegration. As Hilaire Belloc pointed out some years ago, a post-Christian world will surely be darker than the pre-Christian. No longer buoyed by a framework of moral values, social constraints, or honest pastimes, it is no wonder that people have turned to such violence and voyeurism. Christians facing wild animals in the arena may make a comeback.

—Gerald Russello

“FAIRNESS” has become the de rigueur justification each time President Clinton or some member of Congress propose some grossly unfair action. Mr. Clinton says, for example, that it is only “fair” to increase the income tax paid by “the rich” by 16 percent (by raising the rate from 31 to 36 percent) because they “didn’t pay their fair share of taxes” during the 1980’s. It fazes the President not that this statement is flat-out wrong. Paul G. Merski, fiscal affairs director of the Tax Foundation in Washington, D.C., reports that tax-return data show the nation’s top earners paid a steadily higher percentage of the total U.S. tax bill during the 1980’s. “By 1990, the top 5 percent of earners paid 42.9 percent of total income tax revenues. That’s up a sharp 17.9 percent from 1980, when they paid 36.4 percent of the taxes collected,”

reports Merski. Furthermore, the data show that even if the tax burden of every person making \$200,000 or more a year were doubled, the increased revenues would cover only six weeks of federal spending.

Since it is one of Mr. Clinton’s proudest boasts that 75 percent of his tax increases will “fall on the rich,” it is instructive to see at what level of income the tax punishment starts. In his original pronouncements Clinton said that he would raise the income tax on only the “upper 2 percent” of Americans earning \$200,000 or more annually. But a funny thing happened on the way to enforcing “fairness” on these higher earners. Under his plan, any individual with an adjusted gross income of \$115,000 a year or more is considered “rich” and is therefore given an equal opportunity to have his or her income tax rate raised to 36 percent. Coming from Arkansas, President Clinton might actually believe that someone who earns \$115,000 a year is “rich.” However, in California—which has 16.5 percent of the taxpayers who make \$100,000 or more—\$115,000 for a family of four is really only middle class. New arrivals find this out in a hurry when they price new single-family homes. They start in the low six figures.

As it happens, some 52 percent of Americans reporting income over \$100,000 a year are small-business owners. They are among the 20 million men and women who create nearly all of the new jobs in this country. During the 1980’s that Mr. Clinton so despises, these small business owners created an astonishing 20 million new jobs while the *Fortune* 500 companies were net job losers. They achieved this remarkable record by risking their own capital, working 12-hour days and six-day weeks, scrimping to send their kids to college, forgoing vacations, coping with an avalanche of costly legislative mandates, regulations, and taxes spewing forth from national, state, and local governments, and by doing something Congress and the White House have not done for 24 years—balancing their budgets! It is an affront to these hard-working business owners to use the broad-brush appellation “the rich” against anyone who earns \$115,000 a year, and it is a gratuitous insult to imply that anyone who has achieved this degree of financial success has done so by virtue of greed and special favors re-

ceived during the Reagan-Bush years.

In fairness, Mr. Clinton and members of his party should stop giving fairness a bad name. If the President wants to attack people for being “rich,” let him turn his venom on his Cabinet, which is composed mostly of millionaire lawyers.

—Oliver Starr, Jr.

GAYS AND JUDAISM were recently discussed in the summer 1993 issue of the *Public Interest*. Since the author of the article, Dennis Praeger, had been identified a few weeks before in *Insight* as a political conservative and Jewish traditionalist, one might have expected to find here an attack on sexual perversion based on Leviticus 18. And Praeger does mention that in the Mosaic law a man who lies with another man is committing *toavah*, an abomination punishable by death. He then points out that homosexuality was not only a grievous offense in the Bible, but one likened there to such hideous acts of defilement as incest, carnal relations with animals, and human sacrifice.

Praeger might have gone further and noted that in Leviticus 18:24 divine judgment is threatened against nations that sanction such pollution (*tumah*). Thus the Canaanites will be vomited out of their land and dispossessed by the Hebrews for practicing sexual perversion. Such practices are characteristic of those particularly wicked nations, like the Canaanites, whom the Hebrews are to destroy in response to a divine commandment. Though such statements would offend Abraham Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League, Rabbi David Saperstein of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, and other Jewish communal leaders now lumping anti-Semitism and homophobia together, the Jewish heritage does provide the most vehement and merciless condemnation of homosexuality yet produced. Unlike those who speak for Judaism, homosexuals are right to hate the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. Its views on gays are far more shockingly hostile than what one encounters among today’s self-proclaimed religious conservatives.

Despite his reference to a few of the relevant phrases from Leviticus, Praeger goes on to smother the full force of the Hebraic judgment about moral polluters. Once settling his reservations (the term may be too strong) about homosexuality, he reaches for liberal ba-

nalities. For example: "It goes without saying, but again it needs to be said [for whom?], that to hurt a homosexual, to be insensitive to a homosexual because of the person's homosexuality, is despicable." Moreover, "In general not hiring a person because he or she is gay is morally indefensible"; "a homosexual can be as decent a human being as anyone else." Though Praeger claims that he believes in the moral authority of the Bible, clearly his use of the terms "moral" and "decent" in these remarks have nothing to do with biblical judgments. They seem to have been lifted from editorialists at the *New York Times* or from social workers trying to express deep thoughts.

Praeger offers another nontraditional and non-Hebraic opinion when he explains: "I regard these people [homosexual acquaintances] as no less worthy of friendship than my priest friends whose celibacy I do not agree with, or my bachelor friends whose decision not to marry I disagree with." Needless to say, Judaism has never viewed homosexuality and celibacy in the same light. Though Jews have traditionally elevated the married over the unmarried state, in obedience to the Bible's first commandment, celibacy has never been, for Jews, a capital offense or a ritual abomination. Jews have certainly not been commanded to root out people who practice celibacy, as they have those who commit sexual perversion. In ancient times there were Essene communities of Jewish monks and at least one Talmudic sage who chose not to marry out of devotion to study.

Praeger appears to know even less about world history than he does about Judaica. He insists that most cultures have been awash in homosexuality, and therefore the heterosexual institutions of the West built by Jews and Christians are "a terribly difficult and unique thing." In support of his contention, Praeger cites a variety of questionable sources, from anecdotal material about the private lives of Roman emperors, which Edward Gibbon drew from the court chronicler Suetonius, to an unmistakably pro-gay and antireligious study of culture and sexuality brought out in 1988 by the sociologist David Greenberg. Praeger is almost touchingly naive in the way he ascribes validity to unproved reports about homosexual activity. Though the late chief rabbi of Great Britain, Joseph Hertz, seems to have anticipated Praeger when he referred to the

"abyss of depravity" separating the Hebrews from the Greeks and Romans on the homosexual question, it is not at all clear that the abyss was as big as either might imagine. Up until recently, before the onslaught of gay ideology, historians and anthropologists still asked sensible things about the nature and extent of homoeroticism in classical cultures. How socially widespread was homoerotic behavior among the Greeks and Romans? Did it typically involve sexual relations, or was it mostly confined to other, less interesting forms of male bonding?

In any case, it is clear that outside of the contemporary West, mostly North America, no society has ever tolerated homosexuality as an alternative to heterosexual marriage. Even homoerotic Greeks were expected to marry and procreate, and the Greeks placed moral emphasis on procreative responsibilities, *paidopoia*, as the Hebrews did on the precept "Be fruitful and multiply." he, whose scholarly universe seems coextensive with American journalism, has no sense of these facts. Like Hebrews but unlike the gay friends whom he showers with the same social esteem as celibate priests, pagans valued the heterosexual family, even if they permitted kinky things to go on outside it. The American gay movement does not come from classical civilization, but from a quintessentially modern alliance between social engineering and sexual deviance. And the percentage of our population engaging in alternate lifestyles remains considerably lower than the media suggest. According to an extensive survey on habitual homosexuality recently concluded by the Battelle Institute, that figure currently stands at about one percent. Homosexual advocates have cooked their figures not only for our own practicing gays but for those they allege to find in other times and places.

One would have hoped that Praeger might have seen through this. Perhaps he did but decided to play it safe. Being "insensitive" to gays can, after all, be hazardous to one's journalistic well-being. Two weeks earlier an announcement had appeared in Jewish newspapers across the country about the formation of a "new Washington-based Jewish think tank," in which Praeger will be participating with Norman Podhoretz, Midge Decter, Daniel Pipes, and Irving Kristol. The "conservative approach to social issues" that Praeger and his colleagues take seeks

to be "compassionate." From this description and from Praeger's observations on homosexuality, it is clear that Rabbi Saperstein, Mr. Foxman, and the liberal American Jewish Congress will not have to engage in a protracted cultural war. Again we shall see in practice the noisy operation of a nonopposition, or of what Samuel Francis once dubbed, perhaps in annoyance, "the harmless persuasion."

—Paul Gottfried

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY of Mr. M, my parents' 94-year-old neighbor, and of novelist Henry W. Clune no longer exists. This became clear to me while talking to Mr. M in the garden he has kept since before the Flood. He cut some rhubarb stalks and remembered his 20th birthday, on Armistice Day, 1918. He was not enthusiastic about the First World War. "That was one maybe we shoulda stayed out of," I offered. "We shoulda stayed out of them all," said Mr. M, a rock-ribbed Republican and Scots-American and Methodist, in roughly that order. Mr. M ran the YMCA for many years and, befitting his position, was a stalwart of the local GOP. A gymnasium and a Sunday School class are named for him.

"I'm worried about this thing in Bosnia," he said, wiping the sweat from his brow. (He'd been weeding for two hours under a springtime sun before I came along.) "We always get into these wars. None of our business. Why don't we just stay over here and let them take care of over there. Don't send 'em money, nothing." Mr. M volunteered that he'd voted for Bush in 1992 but regretted it; he was eager to vote for "this guy Perot" next time, when he will be 97, a year older than the century.

The novelist Henry W. Clune, Mr. M's senior at 103, was similarly vexed by the war drums when I saw him the next day. "It's stupidity," he said, sipping his martini. "I'm like Fred Allen: I'd resign from the human race if I could get my membership fee refunded. We're trying to police the world when we can't even police our own streets."

Henry is a Main Street Republican who cast his first vote for William Howard Taft. He became disaligned in the 1960's, when he denounced the Vietnam War as an "obscene enterprise" in his Gannett newspaper column. He was for normalcy in 1920 and America First in 1940 and peace in 1966. Natu-

rally.

Democrats, for the zillionth time since Woodrow Wilson, are entangling us in military involvements that Middle America does not want. But there is no La Follette, no Borah, no Robert Taft to represent what Sinclair Lewis called the Mind Your Own Business Party. The GOP leadership, which for 12 years rubber-stamped the Rathole Patrol's adventures in Grenada, Kuwait, Panama, Nicaragua, and other exotic places of no conceivable interest to any normal American, is scarcely in a position to criticize Bill Clinton for his expansive definition of our vital interests. A Republican Party that dishonors its elders (excepting the Bel Air Cold War liberal who bankrupted our country), that ignores the wise counsel of older patriots, that is led by a cadre of imperialists and hustlers and belligerent draft-dodgers, deserves its current low state. Venerable Republicans who still place America First have more in common with the Congressional Black Caucus than with the America Last gang of Kemp and Bennett and Cheney.

In the aftermath of Mr. Wilson's war to end all wars, Republican Senator Hiram Johnson said he feared that internationalism would kill what he called "the creed of my manhood": "American ideals, American principles, and American patriotism." Mr. Clinton's meddling in the Balkans, Africa, and the Caribbean will have the same casualties, only

we have no Hiram Johnson to mourn the dead. We have no Republican Party to speak for Main Street. We are blessed, however, with a remnant of extraordinary men who remember what America used to be, because they built it, they grew it, they wrote it, and for them, at least, it will never die.

—Bill Kauffman

THE OBSCENE production of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* perpetrated on a national audience by "director" Peter Sellars and his ensemble troupe in 1991 still bothers me, not least because the abomination has just recently been released on laser disc. More to the point, I am still trying to reconcile the expenditure of both federal funds and donors' hard-earned dollars by the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), which apparently thought that updating Mozart through the eyes of a pervert was an excellent way to kick off the composer's bicentennial.

Those familiar with my reviews in *Opera News* between 1978 and 1989 will know that I am not a champion of bizarre productions. In fact, there are those who thought (and continue to think) that I am some sort of right-wing reactionary opposed to any creative ideas in opera production. This is not true. I have taken every opportunity to applaud those productions I considered to be truly imaginative, such as the 1986 Salzburg

Don Giovanni, in which computer-enhanced graphics were used to have the Commendatore's statue drag the Don into a void of nothingness, or the 1989 San Francisco *L'Africaine*, in which larger-than-life sets and props enhanced Meyerbeer's fantastic setting of the saga of Vasco da Gama. Imagination I can take; sheer perversion, for the sake of angering viewers into taking notice of it, I consider unconscionable.

For those who did not see it, Sellars updated the Beaumarchais play to the present and set it in a condominium in the Trump Tower. Figaro and Susanna were given the laundry room in which to set their wedded bliss: a Tide box and Snuggle fabric softener bottle were apparent in the background. Susanna emphasized the fact that Count Almaviva had tried to enjoy her favors by cupping her breasts, while the English "translation" of the Italian text referred to Almaviva as a "dirty old lech." When Figaro sang *Se vuol ballare*, the words were translated as "If you wanna dance / Count baby / I'll play back-up guitar." Cherubino, dressed as a New York street punk (complete with rat-tail haircut), bounced on the bed in simulated masturbation while singing *Non so piu*. Later in the performance, Marzellina came screaming across the stage that she had loaned Figaro "2,000 bucks," and when the Count made his assignation with Susanna she trembled in disgust against the wall while he put his hand and his head up her dress.

As if to emphasize the "ensemble" effort of the cast, all of the voices sounded alike, thin, brittle, slightly throaty, punching out the lyrics rather than pursuing a curvilinear musical line when called for. The baritones—Figaro, Almaviva, and Bartolo—could have been interchangeable; so too could the Countess and Susanna. No individuality of style or interpretation was allowed. All was to be conveyed by the physical contortions on stage, such as Figaro's forward rolls in the opening duet with Susanna or Don Basilio's arm-waving and spinning in circles during his aria. The majority of these singers, in my opinion, do not deserve to be mentioned, but I was astonished and sickened to see Frank Kelley, a decade ago one of the most promising light lyric tenors to ever graduate from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and a former member of Joel Cohen's Boston Camerata, distorting his still-beautiful voice by following Sellars'

LIBERAL ARTS

ANTI-CHRISTIAN ANTI-ANTI-SEMITISM

A film continuously showing at the new United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has been charged with violating the Constitution by Washington minister and broadcaster Dale Crowley, Jr. Crowley argues that the entire film, entitled "Anti-Semitism," is anti-Christian and thus violates the First Amendment by promoting, at taxpayer expense, one religion (Judaism) over another (Christianity). He points to the film's assertions that throughout history "Christians persecuted Jews" and that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John falsified the story of the crucifixion of Jesus in the Gospels, as well as to the film's failure to acknowledge any Christian compassion or kindness toward Jews.

"The museum is located on property donated by U.S. citizens, and is maintained at public expense by acts of Congress," explained Crowley. "So it is simply not right that American taxpayers should be forced to subsidize this kind of religious intolerance, bigotry, and discrimination against Christians' faith." According to reports last summer, all 535 members of Congress have received a letter from Crowley urging them to support a resolution to eliminate the film from the museum's program.

inine directions.

Looking for a confirmation of my impressions, I turned to the *New York Times*, which I long considered the last bastion of sane musical criticism. Unfortunately, that dictum no longer stands. As if to emphasize the *Times'* change of attitude, John O'Connor's review of this atrocity claimed that young people enjoy Sellars' approach and that Sellars has a deep respect for Mozart's intentions! Upon reading that, I decided that someone should define "respect" and "enjoyment" for Mr. O'Connor.

First and foremost, I do not consider a change of venue to be respect for a work of art. Such changes are a sad surrogate for the lack of great operas in our day. If Peter Sellars had such a burning desire to set an opera in New York's Trump Tower, he should have written a new one himself; he had no right to transport *Le Nozze di Figaro* to that locale. Giving Sellars the benefit of every doubt, one might say in his defense that he was trying to make modern audiences understand what was so shocking about Beaumarchais' play and Da Ponte's libretto when they first appeared. It is true that, since the social situation has changed drastically in 200 years, we have come to accept the plot of *Nozze* as comfortable fun when in fact it was taken from a play banned in Europe; but to bring the stage action to the point of vulgar farce negates the marvelous transformation that Mozart and Da Ponte wrought in bringing its message up a notch, from the level of the gutter to the level of true art. Sellars seems to forget that, though Beaumarchais' play was banned at court, Mozart's opera was *not*, and the distinction lies not so much in softening the implied class struggle as in moving the drama and its motivations from the external, physical plane to an internal, spiritual one. The most moving passage in the entire opera is the count's begging of forgiveness, *Contessa, perdono*; indeed, its simplicity and nobility make it one of the most moving passages in all of opera. In the space of perhaps 20 seconds, a lively comedy has become deadly serious, and in the count's utterance is the full measure of Mozart's belief in the essentially patrician state of the human spirit. Set against Sellars' trashy, glitzy backdrop, and with the vulgarities that he reintroduced into the plot, this scene is not merely meaningless but bizarre. At that moment, anyone with a soul watching this performance would know

that Sellars had not respected but betrayed Mozart.

As for what young people enjoy, bear in mind that this is a generation that equates lust with love, a generation that admires men who get the most sex and women who wear their underwear on the outside. This is not exactly the type of audience one would expect at an opera, and those who saw and "enjoyed" Sellars' *Nozze* did so on a purely external level. Like the director himself, they were titillated by the presentation of a farce comedy in the most obnoxious setting imaginable; they enjoyed not the music *per se*, but the physical contortions that accompanied it, the slang modernization of the translations, the depiction of characters not unlike themselves. Were you to send this same audience to a conventional production of *Nozze*, they would probably walk out or fall asleep from boredom. The music was not what grabbed them, and in opera *the music is the message*. Anything less is not opera, but some bastardized form of "art" that does not fit any definition I can recognize.

The financial support and implied encouragement for Sellars' visual perversions from PBS speaks volumes for its respect of humanity as a whole and its viewers in particular. If I were head of PBS, the mere appearance of this *Nozze de Figaro* would frighten me into pulling the plug on Sellars' *Don Giovanni* (which is set in the South Bronx, with the Don dressed like Andrew Dice Clay) and *Così Fan Tutte* (set in an upstate New York diner, whatever that has to do with anything). But the powers that be obviously buy into Sellars' claim that his productions bring "a new audience" to opera, and as a result they are more than willing to offend the old guard. Well, we will see what happens when their annual fund drive comes around. I can just imagine the spoiled brats of the MTV generation turning in a portion of their allowance to PBS because they enjoyed the antics of Cherubino.

—Stephen M. Stroff

OBITER DICTA: Chilton Williamson, Jr., our senior editor for books, will have his own column at the back of the magazine beginning this month. Starting on page 49, the new column will treat issues centered on the American West but with national reverberations, and vice versa. Mr. Williamson titles

his department "The Hundredth Meridian."

We had intended to include in this month's issue an article by Mark Pollott on some of the more notorious cases of eminent domain, incidents where government has run roughshod over the rights of property owners. But Mr. Pollott, although a lawyer and a libertarian, does not see fit to honor his promises.

We will continue in this column to report (like we did last month) on stores around the country that carry *Chronicles*. This time we would like to note that *Chronicles* is sold at the following stores in the Chicago area: Barnes & Noble Superstore, 351 Town Square in Wheaton; Mayuba Bookstore, 1100 Lake Street in Oak Park; Borders Book Shop at the Oaks, 1600 16th Street, in Oakbrook; Kroch's & Brentano's, 29 S. Wabash Avenue in Chicago; and Kroch's & Brentano's, 1530 E. 53rd Street in Chicago.

Finally, we are delighted to report that *The Hard to Catch Mercy* (Algonquin), the novel by *Chronicles* contributor William Baldwin that Fred Chappell reviewed in our October 1993 issue, has won a Lillian Smith Book Award. Given by the Southern Regional Council in honor of the Georgia writer (who was outspoken on issues of social and racial injustice), the award was presented to Mr. Baldwin in Atlanta last November.

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JANUARY 1994/9

by Samuel Francis

The New Populism

In the 12 months since Bill Clinton stumbled into the White House, the most notable political events in the country have consisted neither of his own successes and failures nor of the triumphs and achievements of what purports to be the administration's loyal opposition in the Republican Party. Mr. Clinton's performance in his first year was remarkable chiefly for its inconclusiveness, and if he eventually extracted a kind of victory from the congressional fight over his preposterous budget proposals, he has used no small amount of his time backtracking from, qualifying, explaining the true meaning of, evading, and outright violating a number of his more exotic campaign promises.

As for the Republican opposition, its main claim to our attention is that it provides a seemingly endless supply of potential extras for a future remake of *Night of the Living Dead*. With the exception of the reasonably united Republican resistance to the Clinton budget, not one of the challenges to or reverses of the administration has derived from the Grand Old Party. Nevertheless, reverses and challenges there have been. Mr. Clinton spent a good part of his first year in office trying—none too successfully—to locate a law-abiding Attorney General; to explain to the lavender portions of his rainbow coalition why he did not at once live up to his promise to remove the ban on homosexuals in the military; to keep Haitian boat people out of Florida (again, contrary to his campaign pledges); to figure out how to coax, intimidate, or bribe Congress into passing NAFTA; to control, pitch overboard, or just keep quiet the assorted political nuts and crackpots in the shape of feminists, Afrocentrists, lobbyists for foreign governments, aggressive bull dikes, and nearly decrepit 1960's leftovers who clung to his coattails; and finally to avoid or contain the innumerable wars, invasions, police actions, and humanitarian missions in which the globalist exuberance of his foreign policy cadre would like the nation to embroil itself. These efforts, of course, have occupied only the first year of the political

quadrennium, and the thought that there are three more to go is nearly too much for most normal Americans to contemplate.

Yet almost none of the Clinton administration's difficulties sprang from the thick brows of those whose constitutional function it is to create difficulties for the majority party. The Democrats themselves were the first to voice opposition to Mr. Clinton's plans for a presidential *diktat* on homosexuals in the Armed Forces, as they were to express skepticism about the Somali insanity that the President inherited from his predecessor and that he quickly contrived to inflame, and probably no Democrat was so shameless as to exude the coos and cuddles with which the Republicans themselves greeted most of the Clinton Cabinet nominees last January. But despite the healthy skepticism of some in Mr. Clinton's own party toward his plans and proposals and the unhealthy supineness of the Republicans, what is most striking about the difficulties of Year One of the Clinton Era is that it has largely been the American people themselves who have forced the President to retreat from his ill-conceived schemes.

This became apparent in the controversy over Zoë Baird, whose appointment as Attorney General was originally embraced by Republicans and Democrats alike. Not until Miss Baird's own legal infractions came to light did anyone raise a question, and even then such brainless stalwarts of the Stupid Party as Orrin Hatch and Alan Simpson seemed to find it inexplicable why anyone would object to an Attorney General whose compliance with federal law was suspect. In the Baird case, it was the massive and largely spontaneous protest against her confirmation that developed on a popular level, especially through the medium of call-in radio shows, that quickly dispatched her back to her six-figure salary with the insurance industry, and the threat to the Republic that these shows represented was soon recognized in subsequent legislative efforts to muzzle them.

Similar popular outbursts were the proximate causes of the President's (and several other officeholders') reversals on immigration policy. In California, where

uncontrolled immigration nearly bankrupted the state last year, liberal Republican Governor Pete Wilson revived his flagging political fortunes by a hasty retreat from his earlier enthusiasm for open borders, and both of the state's new and well-to-the-left senators, Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein, retreated even faster. California, it so happens, is the one region of the country where immigration is a clear political issue, and it has become so precisely because the state sports probably hundreds of small but increasingly vocal citizens' groups committed to blocking the human tide from the south.

The opposition to NAFTA, too, was largely due to grassroots activism, and though much of it was cranked up by Ross Perot, there were noticeable independent populist anti-NAFTA activities in Florida, Pennsylvania, and Michigan, if not other places. Not since the controversy over the Panama Canal Treaties in the late 1970's has the nation witnessed as much popular fury directed at its governing class as it has over NAFTA, even though none of the trade agreement's architects, supporters, or well-remunerated lobbyists had anticipated any such problem. Much the same kind of independent populist resistance lay behind the growing efforts in several states to enact resolutions condemning "homosexual lifestyles" or espousing variations on that theme, with Mary Cummins' smashing rebuff to the New York educational elite, Will Perkins' kick in the teeth to the queer agenda in Colorado, and similar campaigns in Georgia and other states.

But such movements were only the most prominent. There now sprouts across the country a dense undergrowth of citizens' groups whose energies are concentrated on such issues as immigration, homosexuality, gun control, and the rights of crime victims, to name a few; the religious right has embarked on an ambitious crusade to muster political influence at local levels, and both talk radio and personal computer networks enormously facilitate all such efforts.

Like Dr. Johnson's dog standing on its hind legs, this new populist activism is remarkable not so much for being done well as for being done at all. What us-

ually occurs after a presidential election is the speedy return of the citizens to political dormancy. Most citizens have more important things to worry about than political issues, and they typically allow the country's brotherhood of professional officeholders to monopolize their fate for a few years. But the current wave of populism is occurring in the wake of the last election, and there is every reason to think it will become even more intense as the wheels of the electoral cycle begin to churn again.

But the continuing political activity of Americans is not the only peculiar feature of the new populism. Almost all the activism of the last year comes from the right; if it does not explicitly identify itself with the right, it is readily identified with the right by virtue of its alignment around the themes of traditional morality, national interest, and national identity. Yet at the same time almost none of these efforts owes anything to the "conservative movement" or the Beltway conservative establishment. Indeed, some of the populist initiatives like opposition to immigration and NAFTA are strongly opposed and even held in contempt by the Beltway right, and hardly any of the local efforts are due to help from the labyrinth of light-fingered eggheads in Washington who are always pleased to send you letters demanding money but who never seem to be at work when you call to find out what they've done with your contribution.

Secondly, not only does the new populism come from the right, and in a way that it has not come for a good many years, but it also centers around issues that are themselves relatively new. The controversies about homosexuality may in some respects merely be extensions of older orthodox and mainstream conservative concerns about traditional morality and the family, but in the debates over immigration and NAFTA appear values and concepts that enjoy respectable ancestry on the political and cultural right but have not generally been articulated in the right-left conflicts of the recent past. Whatever may be said about Mr. Perot's real political identity, his opposition to the Gulf war, the Somali and Balkan adventures, and NAFTA shares a common, though not yet explicitly articulated, principle with any serious movement of the right: the determination to put the interests of one's own nation first. The new populism, then, appears to have several

unique features: it is largely authentic and spontaneous, in contrast to the contrived and largely fake populism of the computer console and mailing list that has buzzed about the country for the last decade and more, and as an authentic populism it demands and succeeds in enlisting the energies and efforts of real people—not just professional activists who make a lucrative career out of crusading or pretending to crusade. It is right wing, conservative, and nationalist in its content, centered on what "we"—i.e., Americans, Christians, workers, citizens, the law-abiding, the nation, or whatever other reference group is involved—want and need, not on what is good for Mexico, immigrants, sexual perverts, criminals, the Global Economy, Mankind, or World Peace. And, finally, it is militant—not in the sense of being extreme but rather meaning that it is serious, more insistent on attaining its goals than in acquiring political office for its adherents, and uninterested in settling for compromise solutions that fail to achieve its goals but placate incumbent elites. What is perhaps most striking about its militancy is the very absence of extremism; most right-wing populism in the United States has quickly attracted to itself the most banal fringe elements, whose preoccupation with combating the Elders of Zion and Satanic conspiracies of one kind or another has always succeeded in repelling normal Americans and guaranteed the marginalization and trivialization of the cause. For the most part, the nuts don't seem to be involved in the new populism (maybe because they all have jobs in the Clinton administration); its driving force appears to be the serious concerns of citizens who are mentally and socially well-wrapped and who have no secret agendas for repealing the Federal Reserve Act or restoring the Habsburgs.

Indeed, the thrust of the new populism is pragmatic, and it may well be too pragmatic for its own good. Either it will succeed in achieving its specified and limited goals or it won't. If it achieves them, it will disappear, because it will cease to have any further purpose in existing. If it doesn't achieve its goals, it may disappear anyway, because those involved in it will find themselves frustrated, will not make money or gain from their activism, and will eventually find it unrewarding if not harmful to their personal interests. Moreover, in the kind of deracinated democracy that America has

become, there is little institutional reinforcement for enduring populist movements. Americans now move in and out of their neighborhoods and local communities like vagrants in a flophouse, their economic interests are dependent on vast industries and anonymous bureaucracies over which they have little control, and the managed cultural milieu in which they are enveloped is dedicated to inculcating passivity and complacency rather than the healthy and active habits of militancy that a free people requires to keep its freedom. And, even if the new populism does endure, it may itself soon go the way of most other movements in a mass-managerial society, becoming dependent on a professional bureaucracy and all the technology of manufactured and manipulated consent and illusory participation.

Nevertheless, the new populism suggests that the American people—or at least some of them—retain enough social, economic, and psychic independence and integrity to recognize threats to their material interests and cultural identity and to mount serious political movements to counter those threats. In a sense, of course, "populism" is always a bit of a fraud, since most of the *populus* is inherently too passive, uninformed, stupid, lazy, or distracted to bother with its own future. A truly successful populist movement is almost always the breeding ground for the birth of a new elite, centered around emerging social and political interests and myths that express and define such interests and prepared to challenge an incumbent elite whose apparatus of power has become an impediment and a threat. The new populism may well be just such a movement, and what it needs now is an institutional structure that can perpetuate and magnify its efforts without emasculating them, a national leadership that will respect and reinforce its dynamism rather than exploit and ruin it, and a political myth that formulates a coherent national vision around which less active and less committed Americans can gather. None of these is available in either of the two major parties and certainly not in the ridiculous Clinton administration, and the new populists will have to look outside the present political establishment, right and left, to find or invent for themselves what they need for definitive national victory.

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Anna Myreck-Wodecki

The Ruined Tenement

by Thomas Fleming

“Every child should be taught to respect the sanctity of his neighbor’s house, garden, fields, and all that is his.” When James Fenimore Cooper insisted upon the inviolability of property, his conviction was as much the fruit of personal experience as it was the expression of his old-fashioned reverence for law and order. Upon returning to his home in New York state, Cooper found that his property had been subjected to depredations from picnicking Yankees who had interpreted democracy as their right to help themselves to another man’s goods. The ensuing legal battle inspired his *Satanstoe* novels, which constitute a history of early America from the point of view of an estate, but his reverence for the inviolable household crops up in other parts of his work, particularly in the first of his novels devoted to the fortunes of Natty Bumppo.

When Cooper introduces Bumppo to his readers, the Deerslayer is already an old man living in semiretirement and grumbling about the encroachment of settlers whose “wasty ways” are destroying the population of edible wildlife. Accused of taking a deer out of season, Bumppo refuses to allow a meddlesome peace-officer to enter his cabin, and when all else fails, threatens him with his gun. Before the agents of the law can return in force to search his place, Bumppo burns down his own house, and when they come to arrest him in the midst of the smoking cinders, the old hunter gives them a sermon:

You’ve driven God’s creators from the wilderness, where his providence had put them for his own pleasure, and you’ve brought in the troubles and divilties of the law, where no man was ever known to disturb another. You have driven me, that have lived forty long years of my appointed time in this very spot, from my home and the shelter of my head, lest you should put your wicked fire and wasty ways in my cabin.

At his trial, Natty pleads “not guilty with a clean conscience . . . for there’s no guilt in doing what’s right; and I’d rather died on the spot, than had him put foot in the hut at that moment.”

The inviolability of the household is of ancient lineage. When Aristotle put forward his theory of political evolution

from household to village to polis, he was outlining the facts of the case as they were known not just to the Greeks but to all ancient peoples that remembered their own history. House and land were passed down within the family from generation to generation without benefit of testament, and “it would also be taken for granted,” as Douglas MacDowell says, “that ownership implied the right to do what one liked with one’s own, so that on one’s own land one could build or demolish a house, cut down trees, and so on, without asking anyone’s permission.”

There were some limits, of course, even in ancient Athens, on the liberty of the freehold. To cut down a sacred olive tree was sacrilege, and a man guilty of serious crimes would presumably be arrested in his own home, but in most societies a man might feel secure from harassment once he entered the walls of his fortress. In most ancient cities of which we have knowledge, an intruder—a thief or an adulterer—was beaten or killed as if he were an enemy attacking a stronghold.

“A man’s home is his castle” is a proverb that meant something in the age when castles enabled a freeman to bid defiance to the world. By the end of the Middle Ages, the concept of the castle was extended to every house. Coke puts it plainly: “The house of every one is to him, his castle and fortress, as well for his defence against injury and violence as for his repose.” Felons were, of course, denied this sanctuary. As Blackstone observes: “No outward doors of a man’s house can in general be broken open to execute any civil process; though in criminal cases the public safety supersedes the private.” But the officers of the crown could not force their way in on some trivial pretext. A man might accumulate huge debts, but so long as he did not leave his house, his person was safe. How many 19th-century English novels include a bailiff-wracked debtor who cannot leave his own home?

The governors of this world have never been slow to find pretexts for the invasion of liberty. Despite the Common Law restrictions on the power of the king’s agents to enter a home without the owner’s permission, in England the habit of general warrants gradually developed, and by the early 18th century, the abuse was deeply ingrained in the English constitution. The numerous and various excise statutes, for example on

sugar and molasses, gave customs officials the right to search vessels and warehouses on mere suspicion, and the infamous Cider Act of 1763 permitted inspection even of private homes.

It may have been the Cider Act that inspired William Pitt's celebrated eulogy of the Englishman's home:

The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail, its roof may shake; the wind may blow through it; the storms may enter, the rain may enter,—but the King of England cannot enter; all his forces dare not cross the threshold of the ruined tenement.

With a few lamentable exceptions, the elder Pitt opposed the Crown's invasions of privacy throughout his career, notably in the prosecution of John Wilkes—the dirty-minded scoundrel whose papers were seized without proper warrant. But it was during the Stamp Act crisis that Pitt became an American hero in repudiating Parliament's right to tax the colonies and applauding the Americans' determined resistance.

From a distance of more than two centuries the excise issues that led to the American Revolution may seem like paltry affairs, and even James Otis—the leading spirit of New England's tax rebellion—only reluctantly signed the protest against the Stamp Act. For Otis, the question was not Parliament's right to tax but the Common Law rights of Englishmen in the colonies. Otis became a rebel when he defended Boston merchants against the customs officials who had seized their property under general "writs of assistance." Arguing that no parliamentary action could overrule the Common Law, Otis declared the writs to be invalid, describing them in 1761 as "the worst instrument of arbitrary power, the most destructive of English liberty and fundamental principles of the constitution that ever was found in an English law book." John Adams, who was present when Otis made his case against renewing the writs, remembered the event all his life. In 1817 he wrote that "every man of a crowded audience appeared to me to go away, as I did, ready to take arms against writs of assistance. Then and there was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain."

It was the invasion of property as much as the taxes and confiscations themselves that annoyed the Americans and prepared them to resist the Stamp Act of 1765, in which Parliament for the first time reached into the colonies to tax their documents and journals. If enforced, the act would have empowered British agents to search property, seize unstamped documents, and try—without benefit of jury—offenders in an admiralty court. For one backwoods Southern lawyer, it was too much, and Patrick Henry, in his first speech in the Virginia assembly, outlined what would become the Virginia resolves. Working up to his peroration, Henry threatened, "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles I his Cromwell, George III . . ." At the mention of the king's name, the hall rang with cries of treason, and despite what you may have read in a textbook, Henry probably did go on to say—with some irony—"If this be treason, then make the most of it."

It was not, as Sam Johnson and George Grenville supposed, a question of stinginess or ingratitude. There had been disturbances even in England, when excise officers went snooping in cellars to find untaxed cider. If a man cannot be secure in his home, he cannot be comfortable in his mind, and it is out of such discomfort that treason and rebellion are hatched.

Arbitrary taxation and the invasion of private property were joined together, in the minds of the colonists, to form a monster that was no myth.

The memory of abuse was still fresh during the debates on the new Constitution. In a contribution to the press war, the sister of James Otis, Mercy Otis Warren, demanded a bill of rights "to save us from such a detestable instrument of arbitrary power, to subject ourselves to the insolence of any petty revenue officer to enter our houses, search, insult, and seize at pleasure." Both New York and Virginia demanded inclusion of what would become the Fourth Amendment, guaranteeing "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures."

There are law-and-order conservatives who have grown to dislike the Fourth Amendment, because it has been used to shield criminals. But it is important to remember, first, that the amendment was never meant to apply to the states, and second, that it was primarily intended to protect property against the irruptions of tax collectors and other federal snoopers. It was never meant to interfere with policemen pursuing murderers, rapists, and robbers. It was not really even designed to protect persons. On the contrary, the main purpose was to bolster the security of the household against government agents wanting to look at your papers.

This ancient liberty of the castle is now sadly run down. Zoning laws everywhere restrict the homeowner, denying him the right to renovate or add on to his house and outbuildings as he sees fit. Similar requirements are attached to mortgages authorized through FHA or VA. Through the power of eminent domain, a man's ancestral property might be confiscated and not just for the purpose of national defense. Under the Tennessee Valley Authority, land was taken from families whose ancestors had settled there more than a century before, and for what? Cheap power for industrialists and resort lakes for tourists. The *reductio ad absurdum* was reached 30 years ago, when the working-class residents of Chavez Ravine—Mexican-Americans, if I remember right—were driven from their homes in order to build a stadium for the Los Angeles Dodgers. I remember my father—a minor-league baseball team owner and manager himself—remarking that we no longer lived in a free country if a man's home could be confiscated for a mere game.

Today, the moral equivalent of eminent domain is exercised by environmentalists, in and out of government, who can prevent an owner from building on his land and refuse to compensate him for his losses. In one notorious case, a man was forbidden to clean up a dump site, because that would mean eliminating a "wetland."

But far worse than these confiscations and quasi-confiscations are the flagrant violations of the Fourth Amendment that Americans have grown to tolerate—much as the English learned to tolerate general warrants. State troopers routinely set up roadblocks, not to search for felons when a crime has been committed, but merely to check out identity documents—"May I see your license and registration?" In a free country, the answer should be "What for?"

In legal areas where crime has been demonized, e.g., wife-beating, child abuse, drugs, and firearms, government agents proceed on the theory of guilty until proved innocent. Federal agents may search a home, automobile, or boat on the slightest pretext, and the owner may lose his property if the cor-

rect quantity of drugs is found—no matter if he can be implicated in the crime. Commercial fishermen have lost their livelihoods when agents found a deckhand with a stash, and one young lady lost her car when her brother, who had borrowed it, was convicted on drug charges. In one recent case in California, government agents inventoried a millionaire's property before breaking in late at night to search the premises for evidence of his wife's assumed drug use. They found nothing, but they did shoot and kill the householder.

I should be the last person to minimize the drug problem in the United States, and I would cheerfully advocate the death penalty for anyone over 21 peddling drugs to anyone under 18, but these cases of government regulators seizing property they have invaded in search of contraband sound all too much like those of the Boston merchants defended by James Otis in 1761.

The most serious attacks on American households have been directed against gunowners. Once again, privacy is invaded and property is seized on the claim that a regulation has been violated or that a form has not been filled out, a tax paid. In many cases, it turns out, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms has made a mistake. In Colville, Washington, ATF agents, acting on the accusation of a certifiably insane informant, burst in upon a mother of a 21-month-old child she had been bathing and would not even allow her to rescue the child from the bathtub. But the perils of such wrongfully accused gunowners, though real, are nothing compared to the trials of Randy Weaver's wife and son and David Koresh's followers, all killed because of alleged infractions of firearms regulations. In both cases the ATF agents were acting on improper warrants; in both cases they shot first and reserved their questions until after the funerals.

Many Americans are unhappy with the violence that has

been perpetrated recently by federal agents, but because of ignorance or cowardice they cannot make the connection with the train of abuses that led to the independence of the United States. We have a Congress filled with members of two parties who prattle on merrily about our rights and liberties under democracy, and the President himself was blowing smoke just the other day, when "Lady Liberty" was restored to her place atop the Capitol. But America is no longer either the Land of the Free or the Home of the Brave. If it were, the federal government's outrages and usurpations would have provoked rebellion years ago. But Natty Bumppo is no longer a hero, and we would laugh at a man who burned down his own house, unless it was to get the insurance money. After all, in a democracy, we have the freedom to enslave our neighbors. Who could ask for more?

So long as we worship the gilded statue of democracy, we can never be free. As James Fenimore Cooper realized, democracies were more likely to repress individuality than monarchies. The danger lay in the temptation to see majority rule as the bastion of liberty: "Numbers, however, may oppress as well as one or a few, and when such oppression occurs, it is usually of the worst character. The habit of seeing the publick rule, is gradually accustoming the American mind to an interference with private rights that is slowly undermining the individuality of the American character."

The erosion of character on which Cooper remarked has gone so far as to make us incapable of individual liberty, but our servility has not bought us safety—it hardly ever does. Instead, we are ever more exposed, in our homes, our businesses, and our automobiles, to the "petty revenue officers" of an empire that seems all too willing to offer us Patrick Henry's choice of liberty or death.

©

Albae Meditatio

by Peter Russell

Already it's getting light and the first birds
Are twittering in the walnut tree, and you
Are hidden everywhere from my fallacious eye.
Some of the pale green leaves at this hour
Appear bright yellow, smooth grey of the walnut bark
Jet like the young girl's cable braids swinging like bell ropes.

There is a mirror you cannot see and a rose in it.
Sun is already up behind the trees,
But the moon, lemon-coloured, lingers reluctant
Like the windhover before he drops. Everywhere you,
Body and spirit, screened by each ovate leaf. What should I
say?

Green leaves, running water, a beautiful face. It is permitted
To love these things with a passion pure but intense?
The young boy with his cap awry passes
With his fishing-rod and his wicker basket.
But what is it between my eye and the passing of Beauty?
The prism of air and the sun's transparent light
Bend in perpetual duel the living rods.
Wherever Beauty is revealed, there out of necessity

Love must grow. Why should today
Be an exception? Love is its own reality.
A metaphor is a bridge to reality. Surely
A single thought of that Beauty is a ladder
To higher branches. I am a straw to Love's amber,
And willing to be tossed to and fro on the wind
Of whatever makes for cohesion in our mutable world.
Running water, green leaves, reflections,
A beautiful face. The weir and the waterfall.

Love is a medicine that makes pains into cures,
But there are people who think that Love is a mere illusion,
Like physicians and vendors of money and weapons
And the learned in universities and the assessors of culture.
Stone, if you wish, is bread, is living flesh,
And the rough wine of the country is Love himself.
There is no sweeter poison to drink than Love,
No sickness more bracing than this sickness of Love.
Love is the cat o' nine tails that strips off the skin,
Implanting a coat of many colors where before
There was only a grey epidemic of scale and scab.

Love is the fire that burns all deadness away.
A ferocious burnishing that leaves only light to the eye.

A voice from the forest, the pheasant's cry,
A cry from the waters' depths, a woman's cry,
But it is not a woman. It is the cry of Love himself.

Her very veils are Revelation itself,
Her black tresses, yes, conceal the mole in her white neck,
But they display oceans of shining darkness.

Out of the blackness of the pool spreads the image of her
face.
Do not touch it, or it will disappear.
As you look in the pool, you look in the rose.
In the center that is yellow, a sea of light.
A vision of clouds and roses, the clouds themselves are roses,
The roses themselves are light, the light is clouds,
Clouds eternally moving in the still mirror of the sky,
And the Empyrean is intense motion, utterly at rest.

The call of a dove, it is the call of a woman
Who is not a woman, the woman calling her lover.
On that same path, for love of a Christian girl,
The pious Sheik took to herding her swine.

What is the world without longing, without desire?
Without desire, neither a man nor the nightingale can sing,
Nor can the rose bloom or her petal blow on the wind.
The Sheik has broken his pens in bewilderment,
The pious girl has given succour to an Infidel.

The air is an oil of roses distilled in the dew of dawn.
It burns with a light blue flame, silent as moonlight.
The sounds of the goldsmiths' hammering in the bazaar,
The sound of the watermills in the Garden of Meram,
The playing of the children in the square, the silence of
deserts.
The voices of space, and the spaces between the voices,
The tongues of the moods, of wind and earth, of fire and sea,
Of running waters, the yearning of all creatures for home.
It is pure, but not like water; subtle, but not like air;
Luminous, but not like fire. Spirit it is, that never knew
body.
That Wine never dwelt with Care, that Sorrow never with
Song.
Joyless he is who lives sober, he that does not die drunk,
Let him weep, for he will lose the way towards wisdom.
Be thinking of beautiful things that neither age nor winters
Change. Listen to a thousand tongues reciting before thee.
And as for the lays of old time, a thousand have been
scattered
On the wind, a thousand buried in the snow.
These the Teutonic Knights trampled with heavy boots,
Those the spells of maleficent priests rooted out.
There are a thousand tongues in the wood, a thousand
tongues in the sky,
In the running brook; in the deep lake a thousand more.
The states of mind of the gnostic seek out and find
These thousands of tongues, unforgetting, and thousands
more.
I shall pursue the woman to the new pastures where rain has

fallen,
And the thorn-bushes are green and the small bird sings.
Meanwhile the mill-wheel turns and the noise of the
children in the square
Reverberates clearly, though the City is three hundred miles
out of earshot.
It is the silence of these sounds that knits my mind,
And the roar of many waters in the night refreshes me.
A constant sound, more various than many words
Of maenads, maniacs, mystics—all the sober Bards.
Erôs is everywhere, and everywhere Eris
Throws Love's pure harmonies into the jangle of the street,
Chaos of market-place and battleground, the jungle of the
world.
Rapture itself calls out in rut for cleaving rupture,
Still ocean cloven silently by the immane waves.
Moses with his rod slew the Pharaoh of worldly existence,
The Muses gave Hesiod their wand and he harmonized
worlds,
Singing of generations of Gods he welded in one the
saeculum.
Somnûn the lover said that you cannot define anything.
Unless in terms more subtle than that thing
There is nothing more subtle than that thing.
There is nothing subtler than Love. How shall it be
explained?
The rational interpreter is like the donkey carrying books.
He brays loud, but nothing unclouds the lover's furrowed
brow.
And I ask what Kant ever said about Love, or Hegel,
Contradicting his contradictions, about the eye of the
Beloved?
Thinking of the Muses, envious of the love-crazed mystics,
I am Drosophila in the harvester's web.

In that mysterious solitude when she unveils herself
When no more thought of battling self-regard,
The sentinel on the lip, the watcher in the heart,
Persisted in their censorship, I said to Her:
Separation has been hard; in this proximity
Naked beholding alone divides.
Dart now on me that glance, like one who looks on a lover
Before Love blinds him to himself and all appearances,
And body vanishes in Love's effulgence. Say:
"Thou shalt not!" Others before me have heard this
commandment
And known increase of love. Can man ask more
Than once united with thee he no more needs to see.
This mystics call, in the anguish of their love
And stark clairvoyance, the Second Separation.
The mountains crumble, even Sinai is laid low,
And words fail utterly in the darkness of this joy.
"O fire of the burning furnace, be coolness and peace!"

And what is Death, the dissolution of the body,
A fair young woman who well knows how to treat
Dissolute bodies. Let her come with her seductions,
Showing her nakedness, irresistibly dissimulating
The wanton harlot. Welcome, O harlot! Welcome!
O holy saeculum, and O unholy heavens,
Open with all your awful revelations!
I am here.

Treat Them to a Good Dose of Lead

by Roger D. McGrath



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

While working my way through traffic snarls on the freeways of Los Angeles I listened intently to a radio talk show. When a caller urged that all citizens should go about armed, the program host exclaimed, "My God, that would be like the Old West. We can't go back to that." The host obviously thought that by invoking the image of the Old West he had made a damning argument against gun-toting. It was the umpteenth time I had heard such a response to a proponent of an armed citizenry. Yet the facts of frontier life suggest that the Old West had far less crime and far fewer innocent victims than America has today, and that the young, the old, and the female—those most vulnerable—were far safer in the most wild and woolly frontier towns than they are in any American city today. We could do worse than return to the standards and values of the Old West.

Two frontier towns with widespread reputations for violence were the mining camps of Aurora, Nevada, and Bodie, California. In their heydays, 1861-1865 for Aurora and 1878-1882 for Bodie, they each boasted populations that exceeded 5,000, were alive 24 hours a day, contained dozens of saloons and brothels, and produced gold and silver bullion worth a billion in today's dollars. The economies were boom and bust, with new veins being discovered and old ones being pinched out. The populations were transient, half were foreign born, and men outnumbered women ten to one. The people were adventurous, entrepreneurial, brave, young, unmarried, intemperate, and armed. A few had struck it rich, but most had not.

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All the ingredients were there for an epidemic of crime, but none occurred. An examination of robbery, burglary, theft, rape, and homicide in Aurora and Bodie reveals not how far we have come but how far we have sunk.

While robbery occurs with alarming frequency in American cities today, only rarely was a resident of Aurora or Bodie robbed. During the boom years there were fewer than 20 robberies of individual citizens in the towns. The stagecoach was targeted more often, suffering a couple dozen robberies. When highwaymen stopped a stage, they nearly always took only the express box and left the passengers untouched. Passengers frequently remarked that they had been treated courteously by road agents. Only twice were passengers robbed. In the first instance, the highwaymen later apologized for their conduct; in the second, the robbers were drunk. Highwaymen understood that they could take the express box and not arouse the general populace, but if they insulted or robbed passengers they would precipitate a vigilante reaction.

If the passengers were not the target of highwaymen, neither were stagecoaches carrying the great bullion shipments. With shipments worth millions in today's dollars, they would seem inviting targets. Yet not one was ever attacked. Unlike the regular stages, the bullion coaches were guarded by two, and often three or four, rifle- and shotgun-wielding marksmen. Road agents preferred to prey on the unguarded coaches, take whatever was in the express box, and escape with their health intact. Only once did highwaymen and guards exchange gunfire, and on that occasion the road agents had not expected to encounter any guards. The miscalculation cost one of the highwaymen his life. For similar reasons none of the several banks that operated in Aurora or Bodie ever experienced a robbery.

Bankers went about armed, as did their employees, and robbers evidently had no desire to tangle with armed men.

Robberies of individual citizens followed a clear pattern: the victim had spent the evening in a gambling den, saloon, or brothel; he had revealed in some way that he had a goodly sum of money on his person; and he was drunk, staggering home late at night when the attack occurred. More robberies might have occurred had not Aurorans and Bodieites gone about armed and ready to defend themselves. Unless thoroughly inebriated, they were simply too dangerous to rob. A case in point was the attempted robbery of Bodie miner C.F. Reid. When a robber told Reid to throw up his hands, Reid said "all right" and began raising them. As he did so, he suddenly drew a foot-long bowie knife from an inside pocket and drove the steel blade into the robber's shoulder. The robber screamed with pain and took off running "like a deer." Reid gave chase but soon lost sight of the man. Reid was satisfied, though, feeling certain that he had "cut the man to the bone."

Such actions were applauded by the citizenry and the local newspapers. Unlike a stage holdup, a robbery of an individual citizen was considered dastardly and provoked talk of vigilantism. "This business of garroting," as the *Bodie Standard* termed mugging and robbery, "is getting a little too common. The parties engaged in it may wake up one of these fine mornings and find themselves hanging to the top of a liberty pole." Another Bodie newspaper, the *Daily Free Press*, later called for the formation of a committee of vigilance, saying that one or two examples of vigilante justice were usually "sufficient to purify" a mining camp.

Nonetheless, Bodie and Aurora actually suffered rarely from robbery. A statistical comparison of these rowdy mining camps with modern American cities demonstrates that today's cities, such as Detroit, New York, and Miami, have 20 times as much robbery per capita. The United States as a whole averages three times as much robbery per capita as Bodie and Aurora.

Burglary and theft were also of infrequent occurrence in the mining towns. Most American cities today average 30 or 40 times as much burglary and theft per capita as Bodie and Aurora. The national rate is ten times higher. Again, an obvious factor in discouraging burglary and theft were the armed homeowner and armed merchant. When two burglars attempted to enter J.H. Vincent's house, Vincent grabbed a gun and sent them running. The *Bodie Morning News* urged other homeowners to follow Vincent's example, saying, "Our people must be on their guard for this class of gentry, and if possible, when they call, treat them to a good dose of lead." On another occasion, when some firewood was stolen, the *Morning News* suggested that any thief caught in such an act should be made "the recipient of a few shares in a lead mine." Other newspapers echoed such sentiments. Following the theft of some blankets, the *Daily Free Press* hoped that "some night a load of buckshot will be deposited where it will do the most good." Citizens willingly followed this advice. One miner shot at a thief stealing a sack of flour. The round missed but sent the thief running "over the ground like a three-minute horse," according to the *Free Press*.

Clearly the weapons carried by the residents of Aurora and Bodie acted as a deterrent to robbery, burglary, and theft. Nearly every resident went about armed. Sam Clemens, who did his first professional writing for Aurora's *Esmeralda Star*, said that while in Aurora he had always worn a revolver, not be-

cause he planned to kill anybody but "in deference to popular sentiment, and in order that I might not, by its absence, be offensively conspicuous, and a subject of remark." Not only were the people armed, but they often had formal training and experience in the use of pistols and rifles. Many Aurorans had fought in the Mexican War and a good number of Bodieites in the Civil War. The people had arms, knew how to use them, and were willing to fight with deadly force to protect their persons or property.

Women, often the target of criminals today, suffered only rarely from violence in Aurora and Bodie. Prostitutes bore the brunt of the little violence that did occur. Most incidents involved a drunken patron of a brothel slapping or punching one of the women. Even in those cases, women often evened the odds by quickly grabbing a gun. Daisy, "a soiled dove," frightened off an attacker with a shot from her revolver and sent the man running down the street. Another prostitute chased a customer out of a brothel and emptied her revolver at him. According to the *Bodie Standard*, the man's "hair stood on end, as he expected any second to be reduced to a state of perfect inutility." A brothel madam stopped an unruly, drunken customer from smashing furniture with a single warning shot from her revolver and then held him until police arrived.

Prostitutes were not the only women to use guns in the defense of themselves or their property. When a dispute arose between a man and a woman over the ownership of a city lot, the woman, believing herself the rightful owner, ordered the man off the property. However, as the *Bodie Standard* said, since "he was a large man and she was a small lady, he concluded to tarry yet a while." But not for long. The small lady pulled out a six-shooter, took dead aim at the man, and again ordered him to leave. Now, with an inspired sense of urgency, he did.

There were no reported cases of rape in either Aurora or Bodie. Rape, of course, might have occurred but gone unreported. Even today victims are sometimes reluctant to report an attack. However, in Bodie there were two reports of attempted rape (in neither case was the allegation substantiated), possibly indicating that had rape occurred it would have been reported. Moreover, there is no evidence of any sort that rape occurred but escaped the attention of the authorities. Absolutely no suggestion of it surfaces in any letters, diaries, newspapers, or public records from the period.

On the other hand, there is a large body of evidence indicating that women, other than prostitutes, experienced almost no crime at all and were treated with the utmost respect. Women enjoyed an elevated status in the Old West, partly because of 19th-century Victorian morality and partly because they were a rarity on the frontier, especially in mining camps. In Aurora and Bodie men were fined, and sentenced to a month in jail, merely for swearing in the presence of women.

Anyone insulting a respectable woman risked being shot. As a former resident of Bodie later recalled: "One of the remarkable things about Bodie, in fact, one of the striking features of all mining camps in the West, was the respect shown even by the worst characters to the decent women. . . . I do not recall ever hearing of a respectable woman or girl in any manner insulted or even accosted by the hundreds of dissolute characters that were everywhere. In part, this was due to the respect that depravity pays to decency; in part, to the knowledge that sudden death would follow any other course." One of the most famous women of the mining frontier, Nellie Cashman, who

spent time in nearly every camp (including Bodie) from Mexico to Alaska, was asked shortly before she died if she had ever feared for her virtue while trekking from one strike to another and living in nearly all-male camps. She replied: "Bless your soul, no! I never have had a word said to me out of the way. The 'boys' would sure see to it that anyone who ever offered to insult me could never be able to repeat the offense."

Today, a rape occurs every five minutes. There are more than 100,000 rapes a year. More than 4,100 of them occur in Los Angeles County alone. The New York and Detroit metropolitan areas add another 3,100 each; Houston, 1,900; Dallas, 1,800; Philadelphia, 1,700; and Atlanta, 1,600. The rape rate in the United States per 100,000 inhabitants is 42. The town where we all sent our box tops when we were kids, Battle Creek, Michigan, has a rate of 140. Nonetheless, it pales in comparison with Benton Harbor, Michigan, which has a rate of 415!

The armed state of the people and their willingness to enforce certain moral codes clearly protected women. The presence of armed citizens also made robbery, burglary, and theft infrequent events. However, because of the weapons they carried, when men fought men the results were often deadly. During their boom years, there were some 50 homicides in Aurora and Bodie, and most of these occurred in fights. Most importantly, nearly all those killed were not innocent victims but willing combatants. Some were professional gunmen, but most were miners, teamsters, bartenders, carpenters, gamblers, and the like. They were usually young and single, and always brave. These ingredients, often laced with alcohol, frequently led to fights over who was the better man, real or imagined insults, and challenges to pecking order in the saloon.

Typical was the fight in the Shamrock Saloon between Alex Nixon, the powerfully built president of the Bodie Miners' Union, and Tom McDonald. When a dispute arose over who would pay for the next round of drinks, Nixon unleashed a vicious blow that caught McDonald in the eye and sent him to the floor. As McDonald rose to his feet the Shamrock's burly bartender tried to separate the men and cool their tempers, but McDonald drew a gun and asked the bigger Nixon if he would give him "even chances." "Yes, by God," answered Nixon while drawing his own gun. Both men opened fire. Nixon's first shot missed McDonald by inches, but McDonald's hit Nixon in the side, and the big miner staggered backward and fell to the floor. With blood freely flowing from the wound, he lifted his gun and fired two more rounds that narrowly missed McDonald. McDonald returned the fire. The rounds tore holes in the wooden planks of the Shamrock's floor but left Nixon untouched. It hardly mattered. Less than two hours later Nixon died from the effects of McDonald's first shot.

Such shootings troubled few in Aurora or Bodie. The men involved were both young, healthy, armed, and willing. Most residents thought that the fight could have been avoided: one did not need to spend the late hours of the evening armed, standing at the bar, drinking, and issuing challenges to others. If one chose to do so, one should be ready to fight and ready to suffer the consequences. Although McDonald was arrested, he was released on bail, and the grand jury later failed to indict him. It was clearly a case of justifiable homicide. Dozens of killings in the towns followed a similar pattern.

When an innocent victim was shot down in cold blood, only once in Aurora and once in Bodie, then the response of the citizenry was immediate and took the form of vigilantism. In

Aurora, vigilantes hanged four men; in Bodie, one. The vigilance committees were organized not because there were no established institutions of law enforcement and justice, but because those institutions could not be relied upon to punish the guilty. That was not greatly troubling when the homicide victim was a rough or a bad man, or a man who had chosen to fight, but was unacceptable when the victim was an innocent party. Contrary to the popular image of vigilantes as an angry, unruly mob, the vigilantes displayed military-like organization and discipline and proceeded in a quiet, orderly, and deliberate fashion. In both towns the vigilantes waited until the coroner's jury had rendered a verdict before they acted. They did what they thought they had a right to do, defend their community. Again and again the vigilantes of Aurora and Bodie, as well as those of other communities throughout the West, argued that they had a "right to self-preservation."

In retrospect the Old West does not look too bad. Yes, men (and some women) went about armed and male combatants killed each other, mostly in fights where there were somewhat "even chances." On the other hand, the young, the old, the female, and those who chose not to drink in saloons and display reckless bravado were rarely the victims of crime or violence. Moreover, dirty, low-down scoundrels got their just deserts. "We can't go back to that." Why not?

I grew up in a Los Angeles that had very little crime. We locked the door to our house with a skeleton key, when we remembered. I often think of the contrast with today when listening to rebroadcasts of the *Dragnet* radio series that originally aired in the early 1950's. It was one of my favorites then and still beats TV now. Jack Webb stuck close to real cases and was a stickler for detail. As Sergeant Joe Friday, he went after murderers and robbers, to be sure, but much of the time he was tracking such public enemies as shoplifters, bicycle thieves, check forgers, drag racers, teenage rowdies, and the like. Call the LAPD today and report that your bicycle has been stolen! Cars are stolen so often (nearly 200 a day) that the LAPD does nothing more than list the vehicle on a "hot sheet" and wish the victim good luck. Korean merchants complain that customers brazenly walk out of their stores without paying for merchandise because they know that the police will not respond to a call for help. The police are simply overwhelmed by the volume of crime and are kept more than fully occupied by murder, armed robbery, and rape.

In Joe Friday's day the city of Los Angeles had a population of some two million. Today it has three and a half million. Everything else being equal, crime should have increased by 75 percent. Instead, crime has increased by 350 percent for rape, 1100 percent for auto theft, 1350 percent for murder, and 1540 percent for robbery. The raw numbers are shocking. In the early 1950's the city of Los Angeles averaged about 70 murders a year. Today the city averages more than 90 murders a month. In 1952 there were 81 murders. In 1992 there were 1,092 murders. The month of August alone had 119. In 1952 there were 572 rapes reported to the LAPD. In 1992 there were 2,030 reported. During the same years robbery increased from a reported total of 2,566 to 39,508, and auto theft from 6,241 to 68,783.

The LAPD (as well as the L.A. County Sheriff's Department) used to solve more than 90 percent of the murders. Today the figure is barely over 60 percent. Detectives complain that the case load is too great to conduct the kind of thorough

investigations that were commonplace in the past. With the exception of a few elite units, such as SWAT and Metro, morale has badly deteriorated on the LAPD. A changed political climate has transformed the once vaunted, highly disciplined, and aggressive force into a reactive body. There was an old saying on the force that two cops could handle any problem and make all needed decisions on the spot. Now, as 21-year veteran and senior detective Kevin Rogers says, "Decision making takes a committee." John Mead, a Metro sergeant with 23 years on the force, notes that the department is now so afraid of doing the wrong thing, or the politically incorrect thing, that at times it "has been immobilized." Police on the street suffer from the lack of firm and forceful leadership and clear and unequivocal department policy. The riots of 1992 certainly demonstrated the paralysis. For several days it seemed that the only ones defending the city were Korean merchants and their sons, perched on the rooftops of their businesses and doing what everyone else should have been doing: shooting looters on sight. Such a practice had a salutary effect and saved those few well-defended businesses. The rest of south-central L.A. was pillaged with impunity, and dozens of innocent citizens were killed or savagely beaten.

The message in all this is clear: it is up to individual citizens to defend themselves. For generations Americans did just that, and they were highly effective. Today, we talk a lot about the right to self-defense, and politicians certainly make all the right gestures to such a sacrosanct notion, but then we make it virtually impossible to obtain a concealed weapons permit and prohibit carrying a loaded gun in the car. Bucking the trend, Florida in 1987 passed a concealed-carry law. Since then the state's homicide rate has fallen by 17 percent while the national rate has risen by 18 percent. Has this made headlines? Instead, we hear about tourists being gunned down. But that is just the point. Florida's criminals can count on tourists being unarmed. Tourists are soft targets.

"Carjacking" has become quite commonplace in Los Angeles because the perpetrators of the crime know that California drivers cannot legally carry loaded firearms and will nearly always be unarmed. Occasionally, carjackers make poor choices. Three such carjackers followed a friend's son as he drove home. Little did they know that the youthful lad, Jason, was a reserve police officer who was well armed and an expert marksman. When he pulled into the family driveway and got out of his car, one of the carjackers also exited his vehicle and, approaching from behind with gun in hand, told Jason, "Freeze, you motherf---!" Jason, having anticipated just such a scenario, spun about and emptied the contents of his .45 into the carjacker. The carjacker's partners sped away as fast as their car would take them, leaving their partner very dead on my friend's front lawn.

Not too long afterwards an off-duty police officer in plain clothes stopped on his way home to make a phone call. While he stood talking on an outdoor public phone, two muggers rushed up to him. One of them brandished a gun and demanded his wallet. Instead, the officer drew a gun and sent the armed mugger to the morgue.

The *Los Angeles Times* usually describes such incidents along the lines of: "That's one robber who certainly picked on the wrong person." Why shouldn't every person be the wrong person? Ironically, the same *Los Angeles Times* regularly editorializes against an armed citizenry and has never seen an anti-gun piece of legislation that it didn't like. Somehow the

paper believes that disarming peaceable, law-abiding citizens will affect criminal behavior.

I have often wondered what an Auroran or Bodieite would think of America today, if he or she were suddenly transported to the late 20th century. I think he would be shocked to learn that sometime and somewhere between then and now we lost our way and our will as a nation and a people. It would boggle an Auroran's or a Bodieite's mind to be forced to abandon his weapon of choice and then to be told by the authorities that when confronted by a robber he should meekly surrender his poke of dust or that he should feign sleep while a burglar pillages his home. It would be incomprehensible for a Nixon or a McDonald to abandon, without a fight, his home in the city and flee to a suburban hamlet or to stand idly by while women are ravaged. What malaise, what weakening of the personal and national will has caused America to come to this, he might ask. We do not seem to be able to summon the courage to defend our persons, our homes, our culture, our borders, our language. While today we hand the barbarians the keys to the gates, an American in the Old West would have drawn a deep breath, aimed carefully, taken up the slack on the trigger, squeezed, and treated them to a good dose of lead.

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Ave Atque Vale

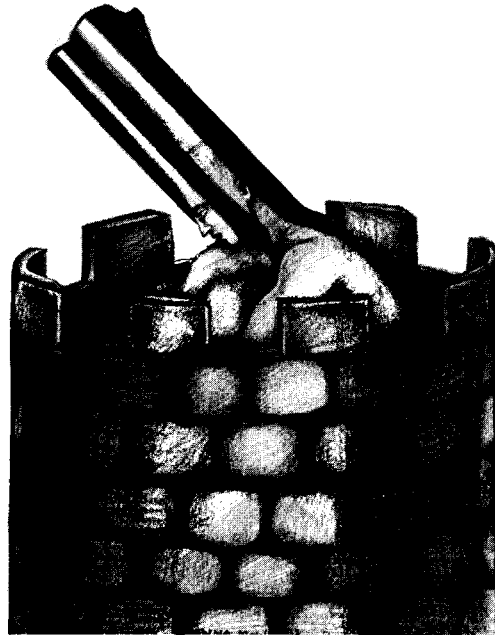
by Peter Russell

A sickly child in creaking cradle,
They fed me syrup from a ladle.
In infancy I lived in dreams,
Was never shown the sun's bright beams.
At three or four I gathered force,
I mounted on my rocking horse.
I rocked and galloped all the day
Till soon they took my horse away.
I grieved and grieved till nine or ten—
I've never been the same since then.
My kindly elders gave me rope—
It's strange that that should rhyme with hope.
I did my best. I gave each child
Strict instructions, to run wild.
There is a sadness in our lives
Which is infectious, kills our wives.
Something, it seems, all sweetness banishes
When childhood's bitter sorrow vanishes.
I'm glad now, near the House of Murk—
For all they talk of here is work.

No Duty to Retreat

American Self-Defense

by Richard Maxwell Brown



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

One of the most significant but little noted transitions from English to American society was in the Common Law of homicide and self-defense. As far back as the 13th century, English Common Law dealt harshly with the act of homicide. The “right to kill in self-defense was slowly established, and is a doctrine of modern rather than medieval law” said an early 20th-century article in the *Harvard Law Review*. In his 18th-century *Commentaries*, Blackstone favored the centuries-long bias of the Common Law against killing in self-defense out of his concern that the right to defend might be mistaken for the right to kill. Crucial to the English Common Law of homicide was the notion of retreat. Actually, the first obligation of an individual under attack in a personal dispute—even a person without fault in the quarrel—was to flee from the scene. With one of the two parties gone, a homicide could not possibly occur. Should it be impossible, however, to get away, the Common Law required the individual to *retreat* as far as possible—“to the wall” was the legal phrase—before resisting, and perhaps killing, in an act of lawful self-defense.

Thus, in English society of the medieval and early modern periods, the state through its courts attempted to reduce the number of homicides by shifting personal imbroglios from

field and street to the judicial chamber. At its nub, the legal duty to retreat was a command to individuals to forsake physical combat. There were, of course, few situations in which flight from the scene was entirely blocked, but even in such a case an individual could not stand his ground and defend himself but was legally obliged to retreat “to the wall” before fighting for his life.

The decisive arena for the Americanization of this approach to homicide and self-defense was the appellate decisions of state supreme courts, which determined the doctrine of homicide and self-defense for each state. Following the movement of the population west of the Appalachians in the 19th century, the highest court in state after state repudiated the English Common Law duty to retreat in favor of the American right to stand one’s ground. The traditional duty-to-retreat stipulation would shrink to a remnant of states, found mainly in the Northeast but also in South Carolina, Florida, and Alabama. These vestigial duty-to-retreat jurisdictions in the eastern tier of states were too few to form a critical mass in restraint of the general social and legal trend toward the no-duty-to-retreat concept. In writing their opinions, state supreme court judges not only discussed the classic doctrine of the English Common Law and the new American legal textbooks that, in contrast, opposed the duty to retreat, but also bolstered their own antiretreat rulings by citing and quoting like-minded high-court colleagues in other states.

Two crucial state decisions affirming the American theme of no duty to retreat came in 1876-77. The first was *Erwin v. State* (1876), in which the supreme court of Ohio held that a “true man” (the assumption being that there was, or should be, no

Richard Maxwell Brown is author of Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism (1975) and No Duty to Retreat: Violence and Values in American History and Society (1991), upon which his article is based. He is Beekman Professor Emeritus of Northwest and Pacific History at the University of Oregon, but is no relation to the Robert Brown whom he mentions in his piece.

other kind) was “not obliged to fly” from a menacing assailant. The following year the supreme court of Indiana faced the issue and likewise upheld the doctrine of no duty to retreat. The author of the Indiana court’s decision was a conservative Democrat, William Niblack, who later would be mentioned as a possibility for the presidential nomination of his party. Niblack’s father was a leading Indiana pathfinder who pioneered the primitive “mud hole” trail in the angle between the Ohio and Wabash Rivers. His son William forged a frontier law practice and a career in politics that took him to the nation’s capital for a long stint in the House of Representatives before election to the Indiana Supreme Court.

William Niblack was a forceful judge who in the case of *Runyan v. State* (1877) confronted the issue of retreat posed by the appeal of a manslaughter conviction growing out of an election-day dispute. The killer, John Runyan, appealed his conviction on the ground that the lower-court trial judge—who hewed to the retreat requirement—was incorrect in his instruction to the jury that Runyan should have obeyed the duty to retreat before shooting and killing his opponent. For his supreme court colleagues, Judge Niblack upheld Runyan’s appeal. Niblack resorted to both law and the frontier values of the Midwest to support his finding that Runyan, as the target of a felonious assault, had no duty to retreat.

Holding that Runyan’s fatal wounding of his assailant was a justifiable homicide, Niblack noted that the “ancient” English doctrine of the duty to retreat had been “greatly modified” in America. Then in a passage that would be widely quoted in other high-court cases supporting no duty to retreat, Niblack got down to the social bedrock of the matter: “Indeed,” he announced, “the *tendency of the American mind* seems to be very strongly against the enforcement of any rule which requires a person to flee when assailed [emphasis added].” In effect, the Indiana Supreme Court held that the duty to retreat was a legal rationale for cowardice and that cowardice was simply un-American. A similar idea had surfaced earlier in Tennessee, where a Supreme Court judge contemptuously referred to a hunter who had been a participant in a murder episode as a “timid, cowardly man.” This influential Tennessee case, *Grainger v. State* (1830), significantly widened the right of self-defense and was ever after labeled the “timid hunter” case.

Also serving to undermine the sway of the legal doctrine of the duty to retreat in the United States was, as the 19th century wore on, the increasing deadliness of repeating firearms. In 1905 the Minnesota supreme court, supporting no duty to retreat in regard to a North Woods murder case, emphasized the frontier conditions that brought “courageous” and “self-reliant” men into conflict equipped with a weaponry of rifle and revolver far more lethal than anything known in English medieval times when the duty to retreat was formulated.

Meanwhile, Rudyard Kipling encountered the culture of no duty to retreat during an 1889 tour of America. As the eventual poet and prophet of imperialism, Kipling might have been expected by some latter-day observers to approve the aggressive temper of no duty to retreat, but such was not the case. Possibly because he was a product of England’s much less violent duty-to-retreat society, Kipling was horrified by the violence of Americans. Visiting Portland, Oregon, on his cross-country trip, Kipling was impressed by the bustling, busy life of the Pacific Northwest metropolis, but he was appalled by a recent killing there. “One well-known man,” wrote Kipling, “had shot another on the street, and was now pleading self-defense,

because the other man had, or the murderer thought he had, a pistol [on him]. I read the [legal] pleadings [in the newspaper],” continued Kipling, “and they made me ill. So far as I could judge, if the dead man’s body had been found with a pistol on it the shooter would have gone free.” “Here in this civilized city the surviving brute was afraid he would be shot—fancied he saw the other man make a motion to his hip-pocket, and so on. And the degrading thing,” he concluded, “was that the trial was reported by men who evidently understood all about the pistol, was tried before a jury who were versed in *the etiquette of the hip pocket*, and was discussed on the street by men equally initiate [emphasis added].” Kipling was an accurate reporter on the state of law and social values in Oregon, for in the same month that Kipling was in Portland, a state supreme court judge confirmed that in Oregon a man had a “right” to “stand his ground and defend himself against the personal violence of another. He isn’t obliged to retreat: that doctrine is done away with in these days, especially when firearms are used and missiles strike at a distance and without warning.”

Yet a one-man scholarly backlash was building up against the American right to stand one’s ground and kill in self-defense. It was Professor Joseph H. Beale, Jr., of the Harvard Law School who, in taking to the pages of leading law journals in 1903, echoed Kipling’s consternation over “the etiquette of the hip pocket,” staunchly defended the English notion of the duty to retreat, and in reference to the habitual packing of a pistol in a side pocket scathingly denounced what he termed the “hip-pocket ethics” of the West. Did Beale base his phrase “hip-pocket ethics” on Kipling’s “etiquette of the hip pocket”? Beale gave no such acknowledgment, but he might well have read Kipling’s book *American Notes* (1895), in which the phrase appeared, and, perhaps unconsciously, adapted Kipling’s usage to his own.

To Beale’s extreme displeasure, the reign of “hip-pocket ethics” made questions of cowardice and honor superior to reverence for life. In an attitude that would not have been widely accepted or even widely understood in grassroots America, Beale conceded that “a really honorable man” would “perhaps always regret the apparent cowardice of a retreat” from an assailant, but in “the case of a killing to avoid a stain on one’s honor,” he would “regret ten times more, after the excitement of the contest was past, the thought that he had the blood of a fellow-being on his hands.” Even Beale, however, sensed that he was bucking the momentum of society as well as the law, and, although read with respect, his impassioned views did not reverse the trend.

While the majority of states enshrined no duty to retreat in their Common Law, the U.S. Supreme Court had in the 1890’s waffled on the issue in regard to cases under federal jurisdiction. In 1921 the Supreme Court once more faced the matter and this time settled it. For the Court, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, a fellow New Englander and an even greater legal scholar than Professor Beale, carefully considered but strongly rejected Beale’s viewpoint when in *Brown v. United States* (1921) he wrote the 7-2 majority opinion in favor of no duty to retreat. The case originated in Texas, a state whose law so strongly supported the doctrine of standing one’s ground that the latter was often called the “Texas rule.” In the case in question, a knife-wielding enemy came at Robert Brown on a U.S. post-office construction site and, far from running away or retreating, Brown stood his ground and shot to death his op-

ponent. Because the episode occurred on federal property, the homicide fell into the realm of the federal courts rather than those of Texas. Found guilty of murder, Brown appealed his conviction all the way up to the Supreme Court where Oliver Wendell Holmes spoke for the strong majority that upheld his appeal.

Ultimately citing with favor the "Texas rule," Holmes incisively condemned the duty to retreat. In America, he observed, the law had—in contrast to England—grown "in the direction of rules consistent with human nature." Many legal authorities agreed, Holmes noted, "that if a man reasonably believes that he is in immediate danger of death or grievous bodily harm from his assailant he may stand his ground and that if he kills him he has not exceeded the bounds of lawful self-defense." With Brown's life having been endangered by a knife-fighting rival it was wrong, Holmes wrote, to require even a "reasonable man" to calculate whether it might be "possible to fly with safety or to disable his assailant rather than to kill him," because, said Holmes with withering sarcasm, "detached reflection cannot be demanded in the presence of an uplifted knife."

Holmes's emotions as well as his intellect were engaged by the case, for Brown's ordeal seems to have reminded Holmes of an incident where, as a young army officer during the Civil War, he sought to save his own life by defending himself in a bout of man-to-man combat. Indeed, Holmes's private view of the duty-to-retreat doctrine was even more hostile than he re-

vealed in his Supreme Court opinion. In a letter about the case to a friend, Holmes wrote approvingly that in Texas "it is well settled" that "a man is not born to run away." More generally, Holmes informed his correspondent that upon the issue of retreat the law must "make some allowances for the fighting instinct at critical moments"—critical moments such as those experienced by Holmes in Civil War battle and by Robert Brown in fatally repelling a knife attack. Although Holmes's maxim, "detached reflection cannot be demanded in the presence of an uplifted knife," is sometimes quoted, Holmes scholars have virtually ignored the case of *Brown v. United States* in favor of Holmes's more celebrated opinions upholding civil liberties. Neglected is the point that to the noted civil libertarian Holmes, as to so many other Americans, the right to stand one's ground and kill in self-defense was as great a freedom as, say, the liberty of speech.

Oliver Wendell Holmes's ardor suggests that the concept of no duty to retreat is not just a legal doctrine but a value deeply rooted in the national character. President Bush's "line drawn in the sand" of Arabia (and the popularity of the Persian Gulf War) is only a recent example. On the other hand, the spirit of aggressive, violent self-defense accentuated by no duty to retreat is strongly challenged nowadays by those who energetically promote the values of peace and civility. Yet many of those who uphold social causes they deem to be benign and progressive do so with a militance that has much in common with the often belligerent spirit of no duty to retreat. Several years ago Molly Yard, then president of the National Organization for Women, reacted to a U.S. Supreme Court decision allowing tighter state restrictions on abortion by announcing plans for massive protest against the ruling. Said Yard, "We're not about to go home and give up. We are going to stay and fight."

Straws in the wind indicate that the American legal and judicial community is edging away, philosophically, from the no-duty-to-retreat doctrine Joseph H. Beale, Jr., failed to discredit in his time. The Oregon Supreme Court that in the 1880's so firmly upheld the right to stand one's ground in self-defense reversed itself a century later when it reverted to the old English duty to retreat in 1982. In her opinion for the Oregon court, Judge Betty Roberts made clear her distaste for the no-duty-to-retreat doctrine that, she held, deleteriously branded men who avoided personal combat as "cowards" who "ignominiously" ran "from a physical encounter."

Still, recent violent episodes in Oregon (and elsewhere) suggest that the mood of aggressive, violent self-defense is as strong among the people as it was a hundred years ago. In broader terms there is even a hardening legal trend in favor of expanded violent self-defense for chronically abused wives and in favor of neighborhood action against drug dealers endangering the community and its children. One of the most significant results of the massive Los Angeles riots of the spring of 1992 is a premium in the public mind on the defense of home and property. This is a view that focuses on family survival in our era of rampant crime, in what might be called "The Age of the Los Angeles Riots." From this perspective the defense of home and property is paramount—an attitude exemplified by the widespread admiration for the Korean-immigrant shopkeepers of downtown Los Angeles who during the peak of the 1992 rioting stood armed and ready to defend themselves, their property, and their livelihood in the spirit of no duty to retreat.

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LIBERAL ARTS

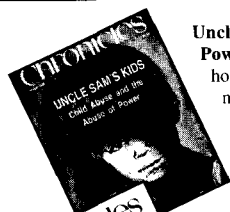


GLUTTONS FOR GUILLOTINES

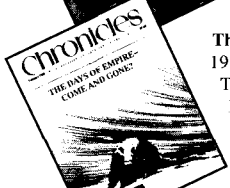
Two hundred years after the execution of Marie Antoinette, the French people are still "unforgiving," as the *European* termed it. A new play by Robert Hossein, entitled *Je m'appelais Marie Antoinette*, tests the sense of justice of 20th-century French citizens by asking audiences to act as jury in the reenactment of her trial. Spectator-participants render their verdict by placing a plastic token in one of four wicker baskets marked Acquittal, Exile, Prison, and Death. The results are tallied and the audience's choice is played out, followed by the historical ending—death.

Whereas one of the play's coauthors, André Castelot, believes the French have softened since 1793 and says he would choose exile for Marie-Antoinette ("not to punish her, but to liberate her"), many in the audience on opening night last October were not so benevolent. Almost one-sixth of the audience voted to send the queen to the guillotine, while one-half cried, "Vive Marie-Antoinette!" Those condemning the queen to death cited her treason and extravagance (many were shocked that she wore 170 dresses in one year) as the reasons for their bloodthirstiness.

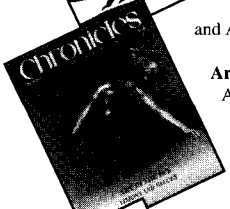
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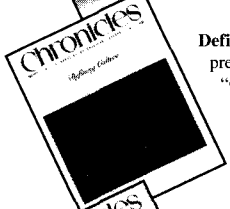
Uncle Sam's Kids: Child Abuse and the Abuse of Power—January 1993—Allan Carlson on the parent-hood of the state, Thomas Fleming on the tragedy of making children common property, Philip Jenkins on the "Believe the Children" ideology, and William N. Grigg on a case of abuse in Lehi, Utah. Plus Samuel Francis's response to William Buckley's "In Search of Anti-Semitism."



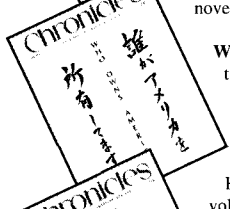
The Days of Empire—Come and Gone?—February 1993—F.W. Brownlow on American imperialism, Tomislav Sunic on Europe's New Right, Mihajlo Mihajlov on the future of Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, and Richard Vedder and Lowell Gallaway on the importance of the invisible hand in the post-Cold War era. Plus Thomas Fleming on what America can learn from Italy and Andrei Navrozov on the contagion of totalitarianism.



Art in the 90's: Visions and Values—March 1993—Alexandra York on Romantic Realism, Mary Elizabeth Podles and Leon J. Podles on politically incorrect cartoons, and Thomas Fleming on museums as warehouses of art. Plus Alan R. Turin on the unreported story of Hurricane Andrew and Robert Knight's encounter with Queer Nation.



Defining Culture—April 1993—Speeches on the tenth presentation of the Ingersoll Prizes: Edson I. Gaylord's "Observations After Ten Years," Muriel Spark on "Living With Culture," and Walter Burkert on the "Classics—Past Ideology and Persistent Reality." Plus John B. Thompson on Janet Reno, Jeffrey A. Tucker on Jack Kemp's mistaken identity, and an excerpt from Chilton Williamson's latest novel.

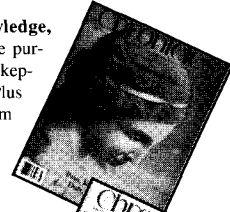


Who Owns America?—May 1993—Charles Lewis on the impact of foreign lobbyists in Washington, Pat Choate on Japan's influence on American trade, Arthur E. Rowse on the buying of American foreign policy, and Alfred E. Eckes on influence-peddling as an age-old art. Plus Bill Kauffman on who owned Hollywood in the 1930's and Russ Braley on the revolving door between government and journalism.



Bosnia, U.S.A.—June 1993—Garrett Hardin on the p's and q's of immigration, Peter Brimelow on whether America can survive an open-border policy, Claes G. Ryn on the Balkanization of American culture, and Paul Gottfried on the therapeutic politics of never saying no. Plus Momcilo Selic's "Letter From Serbia: Notes From the Front, Part I."

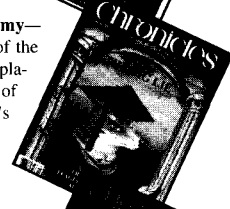
The Fundamental Things of Life: Pain, Knowledge, Duty, and Sex—July 1993—Patrick Reilly on the purpose of pain, George Watson on combating moral skepticism, and John Lofton on sex and the military. Plus Momcilo Selic's "Letter From Serbia: Notes From the Front, Part II."



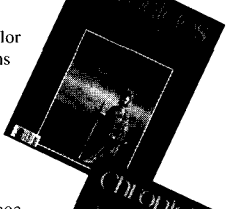
Nationalism in Eastern Europe—August 1993—Thomas Fleming on his visit to Serbia and Bosnia, Tomislav Sunic on the myth of "Yugoslavia," Wayne Allensworth on Russia's new right, and Alexander Yanov on Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Russia's far-right opposition. Plus Philip Jenkins on the Croatian terrorist network and Chilton Williamson's review of George and Douglas Ball's *The Passionate Attachment*.



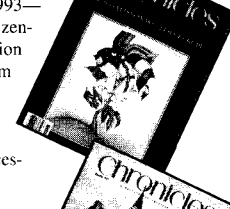
The Big Lie: Fraud and Plagiarism in the Academy—September 1993—Jack D. Douglas on the myths of the social sciences, E. Christian Kopff on perjury and plagiarism, and Marcel C. LaFollette on the politics of scientific fraud. Plus Chilton Williamson, Jr.'s review of William Holtz's *The Ghost in the Little House: A Life of Rose Wilder Lane*, Ingrid D. Rowland on fake art, and Theodore Pappas on redefining plagiarism.



Revolutions in Law—October 1993—Jared Taylor on the revolution in civil rights law, Philip Jenkins on the feminist legal revolution, Bruce W. Burton on the line item veto, and Greg Kaye on the war against Joe Occhipinti. Plus Thomas Fleming on the tyranny of human rights and Egon Richard Tausch on the revolution in Waco.



Nationalism in Western Europe—November 1993—E. Christian Kopff on the debate over French citizenship, Joachim F. Weber on Germany's immigration problem, Allan Carlson on the Swedish nationalism of Jan Myrdal, and Donald I. Warren on the "Austria First" movement. Plus Thomas Fleming on nationalism at home, Governor Pete Wilson on immigration, and Hans-Hermann Hoppe on secession as progress.



The Middle American Republic—December 1993—Samuel Francis on winning the culture war, Bill Kauffman on Middle American writers, Anthony Harrigan on the culture of the Plains States, and Allan Carlson on the rooted life of Ohioan Louis Bromfield. Plus John Meroney on the controversy over Maya Angelou's "Inaugural Poem" and David R. Slavitt on the metaflicks *Jurassic Park* and *The Fugitive*.

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A Walk on the Dark Side

by Wayne Allensworth

"Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

—Thomas Adams

**Black Hundred: The Rise of the
Extreme Right in Russia**

by Walter Laqueur
New York: Harper Collins;
288 pp., \$27.50



Conspiracy theories have found a ready audience in many countries in many different times. When cataclysmic events shock a country to its foundations, when people feel impotent before history's tidal wave, when war or economic collapse or political disintegration mark the end of a historical era and, having rendered old points of reference obsolete, signal the beginning of an uncertain future, a certain segment of any society will turn to the comfort of easy, all-encompassing fantasies in order to explain the heretofore inexplicable and to find something, *someone*, to blame. Disaster is far easier to digest if an enemy, an evil foe whose destruction will bring the solution of our ills, the end of our pain, is apparent. The steadfast, the loyal, and the strong can then exorcise the demons of uncertainty, and, having identified the enemy, unite the forces of light to strike back at the darkness. The will to action will be satisfied.

Russia, a long-suffering and, for much of its history, isolated nation that has been perplexed by any number of catastrophes, has had a particularly pronounced tendency to seek answers in fantastic conspiratorial theories. In his new book *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, Walter Laqueur, a man who has spilt much ink on



Anna Myeck-Wodecki

the subjects of nationalism, Nazism, and communism, attempts to describe the origins of the convoluted set of conspiracy theories that set Russia's extreme nationalists apart from those of a more moderate and rational complexion. Mr. Laqueur further surveys the current extremist political scene, on which the Black Hundred and its soulmate, National Bolshevism, have emerged from the shadows following the collapse of the Soviet Union. These are the book's primary tasks, which Mr. Laqueur com-

pletes successfully. Where *Black Hundred* falls short is in its attempt to expound on the subject of Russian nationalism in general. The book is too long for the first jobs, and too short and unfocused for the second.

"Why concentrate on various fringe groups, thus creating the impression that all Russian patriots are chauvinists, villains, and madmen?" Mr. Laqueur asks himself in the book's introduction. The answer to this question is apparent to anyone familiar with the current Russian political landscape: an extreme nationalist presidential candidate (demagogue Vladimir Zhirinovsky) who receives six million votes, an extremist ideology that has had adherents among the country's topmost leadership (from czarist ministers to Stalinist commissars to various public figures in both Gorbachev's and Yeltsin's governments), and "a political-literary journal [promoting that ideology] circulated in hundreds of thousands of copies" do not represent, writes Mr. Laqueur, "a fringe phenomenon." The extremist ideology in question is not defined in exactly the same way in all times and in all places in Russia but is, rather, a loose set of ideas focused on attempts by alien powers and internal collaborators, acting as part of a worldwide conspiracy, to destroy Russia, to make her a colony of foreign enemies, and, ultimately, to carry out the genocide of the Russian nation. Mr. Laqueur calls this ideology "Black Hundredism."

Perhaps it was inevitable that the ideology which spawned the Black Hundred, those extremist nationalist groups at the turn of this century, should arise in a country threatened as Russia was at that time by the specter of revolution. Great and Holy Russia had been defeated in war by the Japanese, her armed forces humiliated, her czarist system exposed as inept and corrupt; wild-eyed, atheistic revolutionaries had assassinated

Wayne Allensworth is an information officer at the Foreign Broadcast Information Service in Washington, D.C. The views expressed are his alone.

government officials. To many patriots, the time had come for constructive change; these “liberal conservatives,” such as Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin, tried gradually to reform the czarist system, to move it toward a constitutional monarchy, and to build civic institutions in this land of autocracy. The Christianity preached by like-minded intellectuals would be that of the Golden Rule, of Christian love operating as the moral framework of society. But for the Union of the Russian People and other extreme nationalist groups, collectively known as the Black Hundred, this was a time of violent backlash in which the obscurantist wing of Russian Orthodoxy would hunt down the satanic enemies of Holy Russia. This was the time of pogrom. Supported by the government, touting the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* as well as anti-Masonic propaganda, the Black Hundred would use these conspiratorial tales of machinations by Jewish bankers, the Sanhedrin, and Masonic lodges—all directed toward world domination and the destruction of Holy Russia (as the most spiritually pure and able enemy facing them)—to explain the troubles that had befallen the Fatherland.

The spadework for the bizarre theories of the Black Hundred had been done by Frenchmen seeking explanations for the catastrophe of Jacobinism (and finding Masons, among others, responsible) and by Europe’s anti-Semites, whose suspicion and hatred of Jews would find a ready audience in Russia, a country with a long and dark history of anti-Semitism. The catastrophe of World War I and the Bolshevik coup appeared to confirm the fears of conspiratologists. Had not many prominent Bolsheviks been Jews? A certain wing of the White Russian emigration would find *Zhidomasonstvo* (Jew masonry) behind the “stab in the back,” but as Mr. Laqueur explains, they would not be the only Russians afflicted by such paranoid visions: conspiratorial Bolshevism itself would be both an effective stimulus and carrier of wild theories.

Moreover, by 1941, as far as the Soviet Union’s leadership was concerned, internationalist communism was as dead as Leon Trotsky, the Stalinist stake having been driven through its heart as surely as the pick wielded by a Stalinist assassin had penetrated Trotsky’s skull. Russian nationalism was reborn as National Bolshevism, and traditional anti-Semitism found its Soviet counterparts,

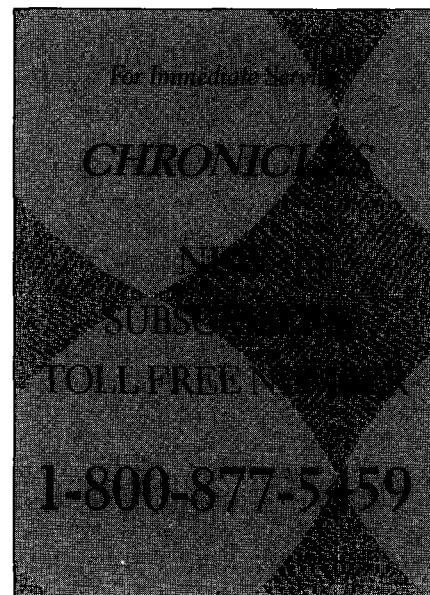
anti-Zionism and “anti-cosmopolitanism.” Mr. Laqueur ably chronicles the synthesis of communist and nationalist paranoia and gives a thorough and erudite survey of the extreme nationalist groups that have emerged as the “red-brown” opposition in Yeltsin’s Russia. The Black Hundred tradition lives on in their propaganda, this time seeking to explain the collapse of the Soviet Union and finding the traditional enemies in league with hostile intelligence services, the U.N., and others in yet another attempt to destroy Russia.

Where Mr. Laqueur falters is in his exposition of the phenomenon of Russian nationalism in general. Information on Russian nationalism is, of course, necessary as background to his story, but one wonders if his lengthy discourse on the Slavophiles, Solzhenitsyn, and other Christian Russian (as opposed to Soviet or National Bolshevik or Black Hundred) traditionalists is necessary. It is apparent that the author’s sympathies are with the “Westerners” in the debate between those who seek Russia’s renewal along Western models and the Russophiles who see Russia reborn within the framework of national tradition. Perhaps this explains a certain casual imprecision of language when Mr. Laqueur deals with those on the “right.” At times, Mr. Laqueur uses terms like “right,” “far right,” “extreme right,” “conservative,” and “nationalist” almost interchangeably, without attempting to define his terms. Despite his frequent disclaimers to the contrary (“[not] everyone on the right of the political spectrum shares these [Black Hundred] fantasies”), a reader, particularly one not familiar with the current Russian political spectrum, may think that anyone on the “right” is, at least, suspect. Defining one’s terms is particularly important in a situation like Russia’s, where “right” can mean anyone from monarchists to leftover communist bureaucrats. Is Solzhenitsyn’s “conservatism” trying to conserve the same things as the communist holdovers?

Furthermore, Mr. Laqueur tends to dismiss out of hand the “right’s” preoccupation with a spiritual rebirth as the first step to the renewal of Russia. “First the conscience, then the economy,” says Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Mr. Laqueur simply misses the point if he believes Solzhenitsyn, and others following his path, are merely regurgitating Slavophile

truisms. He frequently repeats his contentions that Russia’s problems are “social” and “economic” and that the “right” (which right?) has no political or economic programs to offer. Mr. Laqueur is wrong on both counts. Philosophers and observers from Adam Smith to various Founding Fathers to Tocqueville have commented on the impossibility of free enterprise or republican government operating justly and effectively without the moral underpinnings of Christianity. Solzhenitsyn, based on his experiences in the West, has identified the source of our decay in the decline of religious morality, indeed of religious belief, and the concomitant growth of materialism. The program of Russophile traditionalists like Solzhenitsyn is the Stolypin program of rural reform and gradual economic transformation coupled with evolutionary democratization. If their program is vague and sometimes confused, then it is no more so than that of Yeltsin’s current government.

Democracy in postcommunist lands, to paraphrase Lech Walesa, needs its “right leg” in order to stand on its own two feet. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has lamented the unfortunate coupling of the word “patriot” with the fanatics of extreme nationalist groups, and the political tar-brushing Yeltsin’s critics are likely to get in the press (ours and theirs) does not help the situation. As Russian religious philosopher Sergey Bulgakov once observed, “When the place of the Russian patriot is vacant, it will be taken by the Black Hundred.”



Moments in the Sun

by Clyde Wilson

The Neoconservative Mind: Politics, Culture, and the War of Ideology

by Gary Dorrien

Philadelphia: Temple University Press;
500 pp., \$34.95



One can no better describe the subject of this book than by quoting the publisher's press release:

Once there was a group of liberals and Leftists. They were Democrats, they were radicals, they were freedom riders. But they became disillusioned by the Left. They moved toward the Right, they opposed the anti-war movement, they made socialist arguments for electing Richard Nixon. They claimed to be the true American liberals, and they attacked their former friends who continued to identify with the Left. . . . They went on to campaign for Cold War objectives of "exporting democracy," and to support Ronald Reagan and his crusade for "family values." . . . What can explain such a reversal in ideology?

Most of what has been written about the strange band called neoconservatives has been written either by themselves and their admirers or else by persons, to the right and to the left, who bear the bootmarks of their climb to power. The author of *The Neoconservative Mind*, however, seems to have no axe to grind, but to be motivated by genuine intellectual curiosity about the phenomenon in question. He is a man of the moderate Christian left and has written a dispassionate, seriously researched, and historical account. At the level of intellectual history and public discourse, he has answered the question "What can explain such a reversal in ideology?" very well—as far as it goes.

A more important question, however,

remains to be answered: How did a group of New York Trotskyites come during the 1980's to assume the ideological management of the Middle American Reagan revolution? The answer to this question lies in the realm of intellectual logistics and political factionalism, not in that of the history of ideas. A fascinating account remains to be written, and the answers may be looked for in the neoconservatives' proximity to the media and large capital of the Northeast, well documented here, and in the intellectual and ethical shallowness of the decision-makers of the Reagan era.

In his attempt to capture the "neo-conservative mind," Dorrien has written thorough, respectful, but candid intellectual biographies of four of the leading lights of the movement: Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz, Michael Novak, and Peter Berger. He has traced the development of their public thought and related it to the right and left and to the larger questions of the 20th century. This is a useful exercise, though one of the things it proves is that, with the exception of Berger, none of these writers has any real claim to being a serious scholar or important thinker (as opposed to political polemicist), though Kristol has undoubted talents as an editor and intellectual logistician. That is, most of the neoconservatives would be of no importance at all in a public discourse that was less vulgarized and commercialized than that of the present day.

Dorrien has not neglected the questions of intellectual logistics mentioned above or the neoconservative accomplishments in this area; his description does not differ greatly from the critical assessment made by paleoconservatives, and I will resist the temptation to quote more than a couple of his best bits: "The supreme irony of his [Kristol's] attacks on the self-promoting opportunism of the New Class intellectuals was that they were most convincing as descriptions of the career he knew best," and, "Novak moved further left. For the next two years, when such attitudes were most fashionable, he epitomized the social type of the liberal-bashing New Leftist."

One of the most interesting parts of the book is the author's careful treatment of the particular variety of Marxism that he sees as the seedbed of neo-

conservatism. It will surprise many conservatives to learn that Dorrien judges James Burnham to have played a large role in the neoconservatives' journey from Marxism to an equally ideological Cold War liberalism. Here is a fascinating chapter in American intellectual history, though I have to enter something of a demurrer. Burnham, after he escaped from the belly of the beast, was motivated chiefly by the desire to preserve Western civilization: it is not clear that the neoconservatives who adopted a similar stance did so from a similar motive. Basic to Burnham's view was the idea that the *gestalt* of the left had imperiled the West by disarming it. In my youth a favorite barroom game of conservatives was to test oneself and others against Burnham's 39 theses of liberalism as set forward in *Suicide of the West*: the fewer of the insidious, plausible lies of liberalism one agreed with, the better. I do not think the neoconservatives would score very high on Burnham's test.

Dorrien would have done much better to search for the intellectual antecedents to neoconservatism in the strange cult of Straussian political science. Though the personal connections are not as direct, and though the Straussians represent a much higher level of intellect than do the neoconservatives, the affinities between the uncritical pursuit of "global democratic capitalism" and the Straussian universalization of equality are clear. If the Straussians had not succeeded in putting 19th-century German left-wing Romanticism into American conservative discourse in place of the chaste and cool republicanism of the Founding Fathers, the neoconservatives would never have achieved their success as philosophers of the pseudo-right. But the name of Leo Strauss appears in the index of this book only a few times and that of Allan Bloom not at all, which is a real limitation. The author does provide an account of his subjects' controversies with the paleoconservatives, including many thinkers well known to the readers of *Chronicles*. This is a useful survey, though at a superficial journalistic level, that by no means exhausts the subject.

Dorrien finds the neoconservatives' positions shot through with contradictions—a judgment made from the left but one with which no conservative not

on the neoconservative payroll will disagree. The history of this "movement," in the final analysis, is a history of opportunism: of leftists, that is, who used their clout with the major media to form a very profitable alliance with the corporate elites. At the very moment that the American economy was deteriorating at its base, the American social fabric was unraveling, and the American middle class was threatened by decimation, the neoconservatives formulated an abstract democratic capitalism that appealed, with plenty of well-funded publicity, to some of the more superficial aspects of the public discontent.

Though Dorrien seems to believe that, despite all, the neoconservatives are in a position to offer powerful opposition to the "reconstructed progressive politics" for which he hopes, I am inclined to disagree. Their moment, I believe, will not be prolonged—the ever-changing tides have shifted. The neoconservatives may well ride out the next big wave, but it will be in some other athletic guise than that to which we are accustomed, and in the long perspective of history they will rate but a footnote.

Clyde Wilson has observed neocons—from a prudent distance—for a long time. He is a professor of American history at the University of South Carolina and the editor of The Papers of John C. Calhoun.

Artist of the Wild

by Gregory McNamee

Audubon: Life and Art in the American Wilderness
by Shirley Streshinsky
New York: Villard Books;
407 pp., \$25.00



The frontiers of the world breed many men of John Audubon's ilk: footloose, intemperate, experimental, in questionable standing with the law. He is better known today for the conservation society that bears his name—a group that began as a birdwatching organization and evolved into a powerful lobbying force—than for his singular

contributions to American science, and he is remembered as something of a backwoods nobleman rather than, at least in many of his ventures, as a nearly destitute failure.

In her life of the much-documented artist, historian, and novelist Shirley Streshinsky aims to layer blood and flesh on a man shrouded by romantic mystery (much of it created by Audubon himself). She is particularly successful in gathering the facts about the young Audubon, the well-traveled but somewhat wild son of a French career naval officer who found his life's calling in the pages of Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle* (someone, someday, will write a history of that massive work, which in its way was as influential as *Das Kapital*) and in the life studies by Jean-Baptiste Oudry, who took pains to depict animals as they appeared in nature, rather than as static models adorning Doric columns as was the fashion of the day. Until his 11th year John James—or, rather, Jean Rabin, his birthname—had the freedom of the woods and fields, before his father, sensing that the boy needed discipline, impressed him into service as a cabin boy.

The younger Audubon had little talent for the military arts, and he failed the entrance exam for admission to the regular navy. His obliging father, who must have been a rarity, allowed him to return to a state of nature, so to speak, until he reached the age of 17, whereupon Jean Rabin was sent to America to attend to the elder Audubon's business interests. Jean Rabin's departure was made all the more hasty by Napoleon's rise to power and the new imperial army's need for conscripts to make the long trek to Moscow, and he soon found himself not far from New York City, ostensibly managing a lead mine.

This was the first time John James, as he now called himself, failed financially in the New World; it would not be the last. His is the familiar tale of naiveté matched with an unscrupulous business partner; in any case the young man spent his days wandering abroad with gun and case, shooting and then painting the great American aviary that lay before him.

When the United States declared war on Great Britain in 1812, the newly wed Audubon traveled to Philadelphia to swear allegiance to his adoptive country, then quit the seaboard to found a trading post and small farm on the other side of the Appalachians. "Lucy and

John Audubon," Streshinsky notes, "took no stand against the institution of slavery; in 1814 they bought nine blacks. . . ." Audubon enjoyed married life, but he yearned to head for the deeper woods. Streshinsky does not make enough of his wanderlust, which seems unusually pronounced even for so mobile a society as that in which he lived.

Indeed, Streshinsky does not pay sufficient attention to frontier life generally and especially to such cruel realities as those John Mack Faragher has described in his life of Daniel Boone, to whom Audubon has so often been compared. The American West was the realm not of proud Hawkeyes but of often murderous refugees from east of the Fall Line, a nesting ground for disenfranchised Border Scots and revenge-bent natives alike. That Audubon was able to survive in this hard country was a sign less of his abilities as a frontiersman than of his knowledge of how to skirt trouble, how to stay a mile ahead of pursuing creditors. That Audubon should eventually quit the frontier for city life was inevitable: he wandered his share of trails while cultivating an image with every step he took.

In early middle age John James elected to divide his time between a townhouse in New Orleans, where he could paint likenesses of society ladies and tutor youngsters in art and French, and the bayous of the Mississippi delta. The arrangement seems to have worked well enough, for although the Audubons were in constant danger of penury he was somehow still able to complete the work for, and see to the publication of, his monumental *Birds of America*. (To coincide with Streshinsky's biography, Villard Books has issued an edition of that great work at the quite reasonable price of \$75.00.) Just how much time he was now spending in the field is anyone's guess, although his study of a mockingbird imperiled by a tree-climbing rattlesnake suggests that he was not above inventing incidents. Herpetologists will tell you that rattlesnakes cannot climb beyond their body length, and Audubon immediately came under criticism for the painting.

Birds of America, Streshinsky notes, brought Audubon European fame, and he sailed off to England to enjoy it. He must have been a sight: a tall, long-haired, angular man dressed in buckskins and moccasins on the High Street could not help but excite attention. He might

have been forgiven for falling into indolence, yet another frontier celebrity, but Audubon soon grew impatient with the company of fellow hunters like Sir Walter Scott and returned to America, noting to himself, "I must put myself in a train of doing . . . and thereby keep the machine in motion." For the rest of his days—he lived to the age of 68—John James Audubon worked to revise *Birds of America* and complete its companion, *Ornithological Biography*. By applying himself so vigorously to this and other work, Audubon was able for the first time to earn a decent livelihood.

In *Audubon: Life and Art in the American Wilderness*, Shirley Streshinsky does not shy away from contemporary criticisms of Audubon, notably his having slaughtered thousands of birds to serve as subjects for his palette. She also reminds her readers, however, that it does us little good to judge past actions solely by contemporary morality and that Audubon himself understood the error of his ways when the birds became fewer and fewer. For all his faults, John James Audubon looms large on the American frontier. His brilliance as an artist and naturalist merits him a permanent place in the na-

tional memory, and Streshinsky's book, for all its shortcomings, is a worthy testament to it.

Gregory McNamee is the author of Gila: The Life and Death of an American River, soon to be published by Crown.

Recomposing Sociology

by Paul Gottfried

The Decomposition of Sociology
by Irving Louis Horowitz
New York: Oxford University Press;
282 pp., \$35.00



The Decomposition of Sociology, an anthology of essays, testifies to the breadth of its author's interests and reading. While the book has a central theme—which is the problems, some self-inflicted, that modern sociologists face in making their discipline rigorous

and nonideological—within the confines of that theme, Horowitz ranges freely and confidently among many topics, some brought in to illustrate his arguments. Some of the best analytical stretches in the book deal only parenthetically with Horowitz's main theme, e.g., the penetrating sociological critique of, one, Emil Fackenheim's propositions concerning the uniqueness of the holocaust and, two, successive generations of American Jewish sociologists trying—without being too obvious—to understand their Jewishness through the medium of their research. Though only loosely organized, the book is consistently provocative, resembling personal conversations with its author, who can be vexing but who is also never boring and always prodigiously informative.

I, for one, am surprised to see how favorably Horowitz treats the sociologist Werner Sombart and the intellectual historian Ernst Nolte, both of whom have been routinely accused (Nolte both retroactively and anachronistically) of harboring Nazi sympathies. Horowitz properly relies on Sombart's views (without adopting Sombart's values) on Jewish economic attitudes to explain the

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success of all Jewish subcultures in free market (or even quasi-capitalist) societies. He applies the Noltean model to the interwar period with more enthusiasm than I myself was able to muster for an essay on the same thinker for Horowitz's magazine *Society*. Horowitz takes seriously Nolte's view of interwar Europe as divided by a great ideological struggle, between self-conscious revolutionary and equally self-conscious counterrevolutionary forces. Part of the appeal of Nazism, he suggests, following Nolte's interpretation, is its genealogy with morally legitimate, older forms of anti-revolutionary conservatism. Nazis could play effectively to those who feared or despised Marxist revolution and hoped to return in some form to a traditional *Gemeinschaft*. No less effectively could Marxist-Leninists appeal in the context of interwar Europe to a revolutionary tradition going back to the Jacobins and forward to the Bolsheviks.

The last section of Horowitz's book, which is the most tightly argued, presents a compelling overview of the major dilemmas facing the social sciences and their varied practitioners in the United States. Horowitz looks at the growing radicalization of academic sociologists during his own career and notes the chasm between the ideal of scientific research expounded by Max Weber and the ideological obsessions shaping today's sociology. Unlike Weber, who tried to create an iron wall of separation between scholarship and political engagement, contemporary social scientists present their work as revolutionary acts, intended to promote feminist, gay, or black nationalist agendas. Horowitz points to other bizarre features of the social-scientific landscape, such as Jewish sociologists making anti-Semitic statements to please black, radical colleagues and assemblies of psychologists reversing their judgments on homosexuality as a form of deviance in response to ideological pressures.

Horowitz also notes the "war against the canon" in his own profession: the escalating charges that "the academic world and the ideas it promulgates are some kind of hustle to keep privilege intact and the disenfranchised out of the system." Behind these charges he rightly sees the emphatic denial that canons have something to do with a quest for wisdom as opposed to "ascribed status" and "configurations of power." He also observes the reduction "of the world of

knowledge to a vicious nihilism," in which power is allowed to trump all intellectual considerations. Those who rule are *supposed* to impose their vision of truth and reality.

Horowitz makes these charges without pontificating in any way. He is more than willing to concede that the paradigms and research methods used in his field should be periodically reassessed, and he recognizes that researchers are susceptible to ethnic and other parochialisms. What he strongly opposes is the demand now heard in universities, and even on faculties, that traditional authorities be dropped from reading lists not because they have nothing more to teach but because they are white, male, German Jews, French Catholics, and so forth. Though he does exaggerate the Weberian virtues of an earlier generation of sociologists (who in fact also diverted scholarship into ideology during the civil rights movement and produced dangerously false studies on black self-esteem), he is correct about the current academic dishonesty, particularly in the social sciences.

The most useful part of this book, for me at least, is the last section, which discusses the possibility of reconstructing the social sciences by means of technological advances in the publishing business. While Horowitz may be accused here of advancing his own interests, as a distinguished sociologist who has created a publishing empire, his arguments are nonetheless on the mark. Sociological debate takes place less and less within academic departments, and much of the periodical literature churned out by academics is either rigidly ideological or too dense to be read by anyone but a masochist. It is therefore academic publishers committed to the discussion of social issues who can provide the best forums for scholarly debate and who make sure that learned positions are put into generally accessible prose.

As a publisher bringing to bear upon his vocation his own scholarly expertise, Horowitz has done exactly that. Nonetheless, he may be mistaken in regarding his own creative use of technology predominantly as a form of progress for disseminating research: in the present circumstances it is a stark necessity, since universities are no longer able to perform their traditional function in many disciplines. Some of the scholars (associated with elite universities) whom Horowitz publishes are already on the

margin of the academic world, eagerly awaiting retirement. Others have long been geriatric but continue to stand athwart the current academic confusion. Horowitz, nevertheless, correctly emphasizes the proliferation of scholarly presses in North America and Europe specializing in the social sciences. Many of them, like Westview, Ballinger, Sage, Elsevier, Pergamon, and Kluwer, are still not familiar names to most educated Americans. They do keep open, however, the research questions that politically correct universities are working to push down the memory hole. It may be argued that Horowitz in his newest book does the same, by reminding his fellow social scientists what they should be about.

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A Well-Spent Youth

by J.O. Tate

Willie's Game: An Autobiography
by Willie Mosconi & Stanley Cohen
New York: Macmillan;
256 pp., \$20.00



Early last October, there was an item in the national news that stirred some pity and some memories. "Minnesota Fats" (Rudolph Wanderone) had been taken into custody in Nashville after being found wandering the streets in a state of disorientation. A legend in his own mind, "Minnesota Fats" took his sobriquet from the fictional character in the movie *The Hustler* (1961), made from Walter Tevis's novel of the same name. Before that he had been known as "New York Fats" and "Broadway Fats." Old Fats had quite a gift of gab, even better than his pool game. But when Fats claimed that he had beaten the great Willie Mosconi, he got sued for \$450,000 and challenged to a game for \$20,000 in private cash. Fats didn't respond. Then Mosconi challenged Fats to play for a hundred thousand, and waited in vain for a response to a registered letter. Six years later (February 14, 1978), Mosconi got his satisfaction in a tele-

vised confrontation glossed by the dulcet tones of Howard Cosell. It was no contest.

Well—who cares? I do. Everyone should acknowledge the beauty and excellence, the *arete* achieved through arduous years of competition. After all, Herbert Spencer did *not* say, as he is often supposed to have said, that “to play billiards well was a sign of an ill-spent youth.” He merely indicated that Charles Roupell had made the remark. In any case, it is one of those sayings that is exactly wrong—and Professor Harold Hill got that right in Meredith Willson’s *The Music Man*: “It helps develop horse sense, and a cool head, and a keen eye,” though even in that case, the invidious distinction that the professor was making (between three-rail billiards and pocket billiards) isn’t valid. No one did more to prove that than the author-subject of the present volume, who died at the age of 80 on October 16. Flags should have been flown at half-mast in observance of his passing, for Willie Mosconi was a national treasure.

Like Joe DiMaggio and Ben Hogan, Willie Mosconi was the personification of his sport, meticulously professional, an impeccable gentleman who played a ball game at a level of Olympian transcendence. Mere mortals who struggled with their own limitations and the laws of physics could only look on in wonder at someone who seemed to play not on green baize but upon an elevated Elysian field—on a hermetic plane of concentration that excluded even his opponents. He played against himself, and

won often enough to immortalize his name.

It is a pleasure and a privilege, reading these pages, to hear a legend review the legends of his life. The legends are true. I mean, what can you do when you have to play Ralph Greenleaf (the greatest pool-shooter before Mosconi, world champion 13 times) at 8:00 on stage at the Strand Theater and you have tickets for *Abie’s Irish Rose* at 8:30? Easy. After Greenleaf breaks and plays a safe, you run off 125 nominated shots to win the game, as well as an assortment of trick shots to satisfy the audience—all in 17 minutes. When the curtain goes up across Times Square, you’re in your seat and ready to continue a pleasant evening.

That was in 1948. Of course, there was a predictable background to such skill and theatricality—Willie Mosconi was to the manner born, in Philadelphia in 1913 (the same year as Wanderone, whom he referred to as “Wanderphony”). His father owned a small pool hall from which the child was banned. He was soon standing on an apple crate, rolling potatoes with a broom handle upon a forbidden table. Moreover, Willie’s cousins were in vaudeville as “the Dancing Mosconis”—the combination of pocket billiards with show business seemed fated. Soon Willie, at the age of seven, played an exhibition match with Ralph Greenleaf himself—“The Child Prodigy versus the World Champion.” He would spend the next 25 years dethroning his model and nemesis.

The young Mosconi soon tired of the

game. He returned to it at the beginning of the Depression only as a way to support his extended family. He was a shark but never a hustler, and from the beginning he took on the best at the highest level of structured competition. Such years took their toll: a stroke at the age of 43 retired Mosconi after 15 world championships, but it did not keep him away from the table. Nothing could keep him away from that platform where he once ran 526 balls before he tired; where he beat Willie Hoppe, the personification of three-rail billiards, at his own game; and where he did likewise to Rex Williams, the English snooker ace. Sometimes Willie used two tables, as for one of his most spectacular trick shots in which he knocked the cue ball into an arc to another table where he sank six balls. Ho hum.

Willie’s Game tells it all, and gives us the history of pool in America as it goes. The book has two subtexts. One is Willie’s crusade to raise the level of the game (“pocket billiards” to him, never “pool”); the other is his struggle to win, his painful education in what it takes to beat the best. He had to learn the hard way never to let up on an opponent. As the billiards impresario Sylvester Entwhistle Livingston told him, “When you have the knife in, *twist it*.” Since that was against Willie’s nature, the struggle with others was a struggle with himself. Finally, Willie Mosconi learned the secret of the game: “But the best lesson of all . . . is a simple one: Don’t miss! If you don’t miss you don’t have to worry about anything else. I always kept that rule in mind when I shot, and I left many a son-of-a-bitch sitting in that chair a long while waiting to shoot again.”

Willie Mosconi did indeed raise the level of the game by the example of his performance and dapper, graceful demeanor. He was the last man in the world we could ever think of as “behind the eight ball” or “snookered.” His book is even more than entertainment and instruction, and for that some of the credit must go to Stanley Cohen. It is a worthy memorial to the Achilles of the felt and the Heifetz of the cue, and highly recommended to those enlightened souls who would rather read about the Billiard Congress of America than the United States Congress.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

LIBERAL ARTS

TAILHOOK TRICKERY

In seeking to punish wrongdoing in the Tailhook sex-abuse scandal, Pentagon officials have vigorously pursued alleged misconduct by male officers while mostly ignoring alleged misconduct by female officers, reported the *San Diego Union-Tribune* last August. A senior male officer who was being court-martialed for publicly shaving a female officer’s legs, for example, stated that “it was a conscious decision to punish male aviators for misconduct. That was the direction, and investigators were not going to get sidetracked by the misconduct of women.” That decision prompted Elaine Donnelly, the president of the Center for Military Readiness and a former member of a panel appointed by President Bush to study the role of women in combat, to complain to Navy Secretary John Dalton. In an August 23 letter to Dalton, Donnelly warned that “the selective prosecution, against men only, will not solve the problem of sexual harassment in the Navy or any of the services. The apparent double standard at work here is both demoralizing to Navy men and demeaning to military women.”

Letter From New York

by Robert Spencer

T-Shirt Vendors Beware

I'm back in Manhattan Criminal Court for another round of *The People of the State of New York v. Robert Spencer*, looking at a misdemeanor conviction. At previous court appearances, the People have offered me plea-bargains of fines and community service, but I'm toughing it out to clear my name. I've been caught in a Hitchcock nightmare, accused of a crime I didn't commit. It's one of the worst crimes of all here in the New York Socialist Republic: I stand accused of being a small businessman.

While Mayor David Dinkins insisted that New York is "not Dodge City," he may have meant only that Dodge City didn't have skyscrapers. For the rule of law is not much more in evidence in the City that Never Sleeps than in the popular conception of the Wild Wild West. Crack dealers and muggers can roam free after the courts hand them token penalties. Joel Rifkin has to murder 16 women before anyone notices the body parts in his truck. When a thug tossed a Molotov cocktail into a passing fire truck in Washington Heights, city officials acted quickly to advise firemen *not* to risk life and limb by closing fire hydrants opened during the recent heat wave. Even the Man doesn't dare cross the Boyz. But there's crime and there's crime! Moscow and Prague and the rest have given up Marxist pipe dreams and started opening up to the free market, but New York City government remains a bastion of socialist purity. However powerless city officials may be to stop murders and rapes, they know how to stop their real enemy: independent entrepreneurs.

An underground economy always grows where state controls stifle legitimate business initiative; it's booming now in New York as much as in Warsaw in the bad old days. My alleged crime is being part of it by trying to sell unli-

censed T-shirts to unsuspecting innocents. The city, ever jealous of its prerogatives, demands that even the most insignificant vendor be licensed. It blocks initiative like a mafia bully demanding part of the take of a neighborhood business in exchange for "protection." At least the mob offered real protection! The city only offers tangles of red tape and a large tax bite.

Consequently, the Jamaicans and Africans who carry scarves in tote-bags and watches in briefcases fold up and move along when the police come up the block. They know they're a more conspicuous and ultimately more dangerous target than the average crack dealer, for by going unlicensed they undermine the city establishment's legitimacy. They might complain about their lot, but they don't have it much worse than the legitimate businesses in the storefronts behind them, choked by forests of prohibitive taxes and hyper-detailed regulations. My arrest has offered me a glimpse into the actual priorities of the municipal government as the city slides toward Third World status.

The charge against me originated outside the Democratic National Convention. Manhattan's embattled businesses had taken heart from the imminent arrival of the Democrats. "Welcome Democrats" signs were everywhere. As if New Yorkers hadn't ever seen a Democrat! I got caught up in the spirit of the festivities myself and decided to go to Madison Square Garden one evening to see the sights.

Everyone was earnest and ready to fight for his cause. There were quixotes for Brown and Cuomo, dressed like Mike Doonesbury with vests and round glasses, and a different kind of dreamer urging all to "Prepare for the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. October 28, 1992—Rapture." (The Democrats' October Surprise?) The most visible special interest group was NOW, handing out stickers blaring "Abortion on Demand and Without Apology." Virtually everyone except the preacher was wearing one, mostly on the lapel. But out in front of the Garden was a passel of strippers in bikinis, offering weary conventioners discount coupons; one stripper took a NOW abortion sticker and placed it on the crotch of her bikini, right on the sexual revolution.

Soon I noticed a man accompanied by two women, pulling a cart along Seventh Avenue outside the Garden. The cart was full of T-shirts they were selling, attacking Bush, Clinton, and Perot in an extended visual metaphor based on *The Wizard of Oz*. I think Perot was the Wizard. The man had drawn the design and made the shirts himself. Intrigued by their rough-and-ready nihilism, I struck up a conversation, asking him, "Well, then, who are you for?" Not Brown, not Cuomo, not even Fulani or Marrou or the Second Coming preacher. No one. He was fed up, he said. He wanted to make a little money as well: he told me he hadn't worked in two years.

One of the women with the artist, his sister-in-law, began to tell me about the spiritual benefits of channeling, pausing frequently to try to sell the T-shirts. There were no takers. Soon she became even more distracted as a tall, young black gentleman in a short pink skirt appeared next to us and began setting up video equipment. He was with a white fellow, who despite wearing a charming flower-print summer dress, had not gotten around to shaving his legs. They were famous! In the next ten minutes I noticed two different *crowds* of people stop to tell the black man, "I saw you on TV!" One said in Chicago, the other in Washington.

Like everyone else that night, this TV star had a handbill. He called himself "Joan Jett Blakk," and he was running for President. "The Queer Nation Party (and we do mean PARTY, sister) Knows This Election Is Gonna Be A Drag . . . So We Decided to Make It A Real Drag." The channeling fan was enthralled. She asked me to hold up one of the T-shirts for Joan's camera while she made her best pitch ("It's a limited edition! It's only ten dollars! It shows how this whole convention is a joke!"), and I did so. It was a festive occasion, after all; who was I to spoil it?

Before I could give the T-shirts back to one of them and move on I was approached by a burly Irish fellow in a new Florida Marlins T-shirt, untucked. "Are you selling these T-shirts?" he asked me. "Yeah," I said. It was a festive occasion. The shirts were being sold, right? Who was I to obstruct commerce? "Yeah," I said, and as I was about to direct him to the actual designer and vendor of the

limited-edition product, Irish informed me that I was under arrest.

The untucked shirt should have tipped me off. Undercover cops wear baggy, untucked shirts if they're packing a piece, to keep it from showing. I guess the gun was to cut me down if I tried to escape: I was now a criminal, an unlicensed vendor. Dinkins readily understood the "rage" that leads to senseless murder in Crown Heights and elsewhere. But not unlicensed vending! *That* shakes Big Brother's paternalistic system to its roots. After all, one in five New Yorkers now receives some form of public assistance. What if they all started working instead?

Irish took me quite firmly by the arm and started to lead me away. He arrested the T-shirt artist too and handcuffed us together. He didn't arrest Miss Channeling; she was still busy being interviewed for Joan Jett Blakk's cable show. He didn't bother with the artist's wife either. Those two actually offered to go in my place, telling the officer that I had just been passing by and killing time. He would have none of it! He knew a real criminal when he saw one. After all, I was caught red-handed holding the shirts and offering them for sale. A clear crime, a New York crime for the New Tax 90's.

Not knowing the intricacies of the T-shirt statute, I started to ask Irish questions on the way to the paddy wagon. No problem, he said. Just a violation, he said. Like a parking ticket. A court appearance, a little fine, maybe 25 dollars, and that's it. No record. He even promised me that the shirt designer, whose first name was Gary, and I would be in court together. Gary assured me that he would speak up for me. I was so reassured that I didn't even get his last name.

We took a short ride to the station. The only other criminal in the van with us was an unlicensed wallet vendor. He was bitter. "You can sell crack out there on the streets anywhere you want, man," he repeated, "but I can't sell my wallets. I'm trying to make a decent living, and they haul me in."

At the station we were handcuffed to a wall and given milk cartons to sit on. There was quite a catch of rogues: a weeping Chinese woman copped for vending unlicensed jewelry and three other T-shirt vendors. No muggers, no rapists, certainly no murderers, although each tabloid had already carried lengthy

accounts of imprudent Midwestern conventioners shaken down by the ever-alert locals after a night on the big town. When the wallet salesman repeated his complaint about crack dealing he got a roar of agreement, but no explanation, from one of the policemen on duty. What could he say? After an hour of forms ("How much money do you have in your possession?"), we were let go. I told Gary I'd see him in court and thanked him in advance for his help.

Of course I never saw him again. That was only one of the unpleasant surprises I got at my first court appearance. The first was the Manhattan Criminal Court building itself, where I had to wait 15 minutes in the rain just to get in. The Criminal Court may be the only place more dangerous than the streets of New York. It's the "Criminals' Court": it's their turf. So eager are New York defendants to put the past behind them and please their social workers by making something positive of their lives that as soon as their cases are dismissed they start mowing each other down right in the halls of justice. I've so far been spared having to witness this recreational horseplay, but I've seen its effects: the police have decked out the entrances with the kind of metal detectors usually found in airports and, in this city, public schools. Only court officials, of all people, can get in without passing through one of the machines.

The metal detectors were no use: a good many people had apparently been able to smuggle in aluminum spray-paint cans without any trouble. Not only were the hallways covered with graffiti; the courtrooms were, too. I've counted at least five uniformed policemen at the front of the courtroom during each of my appearances here; nevertheless, the oppressed youths' artistic expression was all over the benches. A bathroom on a hallway of courtrooms was graffiti-covered, lightless, and downright frightening.

More surprises were coming. It seems Irish had been wrong about everything. Gary was nowhere. The fine had grown from 25 dollars to 50. The charge was not a violation, but a misdemeanor. If convicted, I'd have a criminal record. The People were going to make sure it would be difficult for me to threaten them again. But God protects unlicensed T-shirt vendors; in court the first day I happened upon a lawyer friend, who agreed on the spot to take the case

and quickly got a postponement.

Before the second court appearance my lawyer spoke to one of the assistant DAs on the phone. He got her to agree to an ACD: Adjournment with Contemplation of Dismissal. An ACD isn't a bad deal. The ACT UP protestors who desecrated the Sacred Host and chained themselves to pews in St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1989 got ACDs. An ACD means that if the defendant stays out of trouble for six months, the charges will be dropped.

Since I'm not really in the T-shirt business, I agreed. But when we got there, New York justice was served again: a different assistant DA, who'd probably been thrown my file right before going into the courtroom, knew nothing of the deal. The wheels of justice ground too slowly for the news to have gotten through. He did magnanimously offer me an ACD attached to a 50-dollar fine and ten hours of community service, but I wanted my name cleared and got another postponement. (Where does New York send unlicensed vendors for community service? The Socialist International home office?)

The third appearance, a few months later, was no better. My lawyer made a motion for dismissal in the interest of justice, a legal term for the People's admitting they made a mistake. Again, he'd gotten the People to agree to this over the phone, but again, they denied it once we got there. My lawyer made the motion anyway, but was told that he couldn't make it right there, in front of the judge. That would be too easy for the city government! It had to be made in writing and submitted beforehand. Another offer of community service, another postponement.

For this appearance I've hired another, high-powered lawyer experienced with hardened criminals like me. He's submitted the written motion for dismissal and the People have agreed to it over the phone. Despite their track record I don't think there will be trouble this time, for the money spent on my prosecution is no doubt beginning to outweigh the return I'd give in fines and socialist labor.

No end is in sight, however, for the city's woes. The guy who was really selling the T-shirts and the wallet salesman were, as they themselves put it, "only trying to make an honest buck." But New York keeps regulating the honest buck away. Dinkins' replacement is

Rudy Giuliani, the Wall Street market buster. There's no serious challenge to the unctuous and hypocritical socialism of the Democratic establishment Dinkins fronted. The national picture, of course, is not much different, although at the time of my arrest I had no way of knowing that I was being treated, in the crowd outside the Garden, to a preview of the Clinton administration's vaunted First Hundred Days: abortion, government crushing business, transvestites.

New York is dying; businesses are fleeing daily. The long-entrenched liberal governing establishment is fast accomplishing the final outcome of its class-warfare rhetoric: New York will soon be safe from businessmen, if from nothing else.

Robert Spencer writes from the Bronx.

Letter From Times Square

by T. Padraig Higgins

Property Owners Under Assault



It should be a property owner's dream. Thirteen acres in the heart of America's largest city, bordered by two of its most prominent streets, Broadway and 42nd Street. Famous shopping and tourist attractions are all within walking distance. Broadway theaters, Fifth Avenue, the Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center, Madison Square Garden. Major transportation hubs like the Port Authority bus terminal and the New York City Subway lines move people in and out all day and night. Pedestrian foot traffic is in the millions. It's an unparalleled opportunity for gainful use of property: a dream come true.

Instead, it is a nightmare. Thirteen of the nastiest acres in the Rotten Apple, with most of the buildings on 41st and 42nd Street boarded up and padlocked between Broadway and 8th Avenue. Of the handful of stores still open, the overwhelming majority are selling pornography. At all hours of the day and night, lunatics and vagrants belligerently pan-

handle for money, drink cheap liquor, and urinate openly in the street. Crack cocaine is hawked to passersby. And here's the crowning insult: some of the padlocked storefronts have been given over to "artists," like the infamous Karen Finley, who have added their own "works" regarding—what else preoccupies the intelligentsia these days?—sex, sodomy, and AIDS. Thus, shuttered theaters nevertheless have "messages" on their marquees, such as "Deviants Are Sacrificed to Increase Group Solidarity," "Raise Boys and Girls the Same Way," and "Murder Has Its Sexual Side."

What calamity gave rise to this wasteland? A force more powerful and destructive to property owners than hurricanes, earthquakes, or war: the government. In this case, it was the State of New York's Urban Development Corporation (the "UDC"), and the havoc was wrought through its 42nd Street Redevelopment Project.

Like virtually all meddlesome and ill-fated government plans, the project was conceived with the best of intentions. The southern end of Times Square has reflected the baser aspects of society's ills since the 1950's, when the first proposals for government action were made. As with earlier proposals, the project sought to drive out the petty pornography shops and close down the movie theaters that predominantly showed X-rated features and "action" movies. Those movie screens were located in beautiful old theaters that had once been among the most prominent on Broadway, and the UDC wanted them put back to their original use. Only a government agency could fail to see that, when it comes to artistic merit, Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats* and Bruce Lee's *Enter the Dragon* are first cousins. The project contemplated the construction of mammoth skyscrapers, adding over four million square feet of office space. A new hotel with over 500 rooms was planned, along with a 20-story, 2.4 million-square-foot "Wholesale Mart" for computers and apparel. Improvements would be made to the abysmal Times Square subway stations, which interlock in a confusing and dangerous labyrinth for blocks on end. Seasoned New Yorkers learn to ignore or decipher the old signs that still direct the unwary to the BMT, the IRT, and the IND—the names of the independently owned lines that preceded the current unified system some 55 years ago. A wrong turn

down a passageway at the wrong hour can lead to a dead end and a young man with a gun seeking to relieve you of your wallet.

Throughout the 1980's, those 13 acres of Times Square were not dominated by padlocks and shutters. The storefronts were all in use, though admittedly not all the stores were suitable for children and discerning adults. Then, as now, shops selling pornography and sexual paraphernalia were prominent, well-lighted, and open for business. The difference is that so were other businesses. There were delicatessens and takeout stores, and some of their signs can still be seen over the boarded-up doorways: Bill's Gyros, Tad's Steaks, Palasan Grocery, Papaya World, and Fiorentino the King of Pizza. There was Maniak Shak Electronics, One-Hour Framing Shop, Forsythe Books, Western Grocery & Deli, even Readings by Ann, a fortune-teller. The old Broadway theaters that had been converted to movie houses—the Lyric, the Apollo, the Times Square, plus others—predominantly showed pornography and action films, but they also showed the most recent mainstream Hollywood films. There were businesses, some involved in the garment industry, where people came to work every day. Times Square was loud, busy, smutty, seedy, crowded, exciting, even dangerous and in need of more cops walking the beat—but it was not boarded up.

Then came the government. With the righteous fervor common to 19th-century missionaries and 20th-century social workers, the project was hatched. In 1984 public hearings were held, giving rise to one of those surreal moments that really happen only in New York: Governor Mario Cuomo, Mayor Ed Koch, and New York gossip column swells like designer Diane Von Furstenberg and actor Anthony Quinn taking turns at the microphone politicking for the project. Governor Cuomo gave a speech that would have made Lenin proud, quoting from the 1939 W.P.A. Guide to New York and extolling government progress. He predicted that within seven years, the project would "restore Times Square, rejuvenating its physical surroundings, redeeming its soul." Maybe Mario should have left predicting the future to Readings by Ann. And Miss Von Furstenberg, whose expertise was heretofore believed to be limited to pleats and the resiliency of taffeta, waxed eloquent on massive government planning with

the maxim "beauty is what beauty does." All Times Square ever really needed was a facial and a good make-over.

In August 1984, the two-volume, 1,100-page Final Environmental Impact Statement was issued, prompting a slew of lawsuits. Still, the project rolled on through the 1980's, although it started picking up a little dirt along the way. There were allegations of improper influence through campaign contributions, sweetheart deals for insiders, and a payoff by a developer to a city official. The payoff charges prompted state and federal criminal investigators to shout, "Oh my ears and whiskers, you mean there's been illegal activity at a New York City construction project?" But after some halfhearted investigations, things calmed down and the public's fancy turned to other scandals. Everything seemed normal in the curious wonderland of massive government urban redevelopment projects, and finally the government was ready to take the property.

Of course, the government couldn't just take private property without paying for it—the next century's clever legal minds will have to figure out how to accomplish that feat. Property was condemned and property owners were entitled to "just compensation" for their land, so the issue naturally came up as to what exactly was "just." Enter the lawyers—and we don't work for free (unless it's "mandatory pro bono," but that's a property and liberty interest tale for another day). After more heavy litigation,

a court order of condemnation was issued in April 1990, and the UDC was the proud owner of 13 acres of prime real estate. Property owners wound up being paid a percentage of what they believed was fair for their property, and many are still fighting over the inadequacy of the compensation today.

So, one might ask, if the UDC took the land, what happened to the project? Why are there now padlocks and plywood instead of shiny new office buildings, a gleaming and safe subway station, and a smashing revival of *L'il Abner* at the Lyric starring Marla Maples and Fabio? Good question, and the answer, in a word, is the one thing the government tries so hard to control but ultimately cannot: economics. The massive office towers were going to be built by two private entities, the giant Prudential Insurance Company of America and Park Tower Realty Corporation. To simplify the end game but nevertheless characterize it fairly, Prudential and Park Tower Realty finally told the UDC: "If you think we're going to build 4 million square feet of office space in these economic times and in this city, when every corporation is packing up and moving to Georgia or New Jersey, you people are crazier than those people on the street we are supposed to drive out." The UDC, despite having a contractual right to force them to build the towers or forfeit \$250 million, looked Prudential and Park Tower Realty in the eye—and blinked.

In September 1993, the UDC and the city proudly unveiled new and improved modifications to the much-modified project. The *New York Times* reported the announcement with one of its incomprehensible headlines, "Choreographing Times Square Into the 21st Century," as if the UDC were going to organize the street bums into a kick-line. Governor Cuomo was still making wild predictions, years after driving Readings by Ann out of business: "All that blight, all that obscenity, is going to be gone." Instead of building those huge skyscrapers, the governor continued, "We're going to recreate the old Times Square, trying to keep that slightly eccentric magnificently artful excitement and thrilling variety of the old Times Square." In other words, keep it as it was around 1980 or so, before—well, you get the idea.

So now the UDC is trying to rent those 13 acres of prime real estate it

owns, and is looking for small businesses that need storefronts and street access. The ideal small businesses for the UDC are delicatessens, grocery marts, pizza joints, hot dog stands, electronics stores . . . Hey, does anyone know where the UDC can reach Fiorentino the King of Pizza? But before trying to track down Tad and his steaks and Bill and his gyros, the UDC and the city had to do *something* with those 13 empty acres in the middle of Manhattan. They gave it to a group of artists.

Let's take a walk down the Great White Way on a crisp October day in 1993 and see what's on the street. First there are the marquee signs: "A Lot of Professionals Are Crackpots," "Boredom Makes You Do Crazy Things," "You Are Trapped on the Earth So You Will Explode," "People Who Don't Work With Their Hands Are Parasites," "Slipping Into Madness Is Good For the Sake of Comparison." Hmm, just the right messages for that psycho urinating through the chain-link fence over there—I sure hope he took his medication at the clinic this morning. There's the Victory Theater's facade on the north side of the street, which has been turned into something called "Victory Parade." It features a large color photograph of two naked, black homosexuals embracing, and next to the picture is a quote from Alice Walker about how this gay love "cannot be limited, cannot be controlled." There is also a red neon sign that says "Our First And Last Love Is Self Love." The man responsible for "Victory Parade" told the *Times* he wanted to project his views "into a public space and let the public deal with it."

Nearby is a former store with a large new sign that reads "American She Male." It is a faux store that specializes in condoms, with male mannequins dressed in female clothes made out of, well, condoms. A sign says, "Make a Statement, Wear Condoms." Other slogans in the window are "All the Fashion to Come Between You & Your Calvins," "Use Our Lay Away Plan," "Be Chic, Wear the Sheath," and "We Have Jimmy Hats, Sheath Dresses, Raincoats, Cover Alls, Rubbers, Slickers, Mini Maxi Fashions." Boy, I sure am glad they've cut out the sex on this street and made it a place to stroll with the family again.

Walking on, the former police department substation on the square between Broadway and 7th Avenue has been boarded over with a huge yellow

LIBERAL ARTS

ARBITRATING THE ARBITRARY

Report cards have been "updated" in 57 Houston schools to eliminate the "arbitrary" nature of the traditional A-F grading scale. The new system is supposed to "assess student performance more meaningfully and give parents a better idea of how their children are developing," reported the *Chicago Tribune* last November. Created by teachers in the Houston Independent School District, the system pegs students to one of eight stages: discovery, exploration, developing, expanding, connecting, independent, application, and synthesis.

sign that says "EVERYBODY" on it. Colored chairs are screwed to the sign, a few feet off the sidewalk. Vagrants sit in the chairs and drink. It is nine o'clock in the morning.

Crossing south, Papaya World exists no longer on the corner of 42nd and Seventh. Here we find the work of the notorious Karen Finley, a "performance artist" known for her shrill, repetitive speechmaking and the startling physical activities that accompany her monologues. In one of Miss Finley's infamous little skits, she used to cover herself with chocolate syrup and place yams—there is no polite way to express it—in her posterior orifices. Artists have always been a little nuts, but given Miss Finley's attraction to starchy tuberous roots, I'd rather have Van Gogh cut my hair than let Finley in my kitchen. Here on Times Square, Miss Finley has given us something called "Positive Attitude," which features large colorful drawings of a naked man, woman, and child, arms akimbo and bodies covered with reddish and purple skin blemishes. There is poetry, of a sort, that says in part, "I tell myself I am visited with raspberries," "I am a polka-dotted little pony," "Lollipops of cherry and grape adorn me," and "I am a speckled wild cat with a coat of rare beauty." Then a little orange placard fills us in: this piece is about Kaposi's sarcoma, a rare and fatal form of cancer that is common among people with AIDS. It causes one to break out in red and purple lesions.

It is true that the UDC and its 42nd Street Redevelopment Project are not wholly responsible for the entropy of Times Square. Successive city administrations have sucked tax dollars to maintain their own bloated bureaucracies, attacked property rights through rent controls and excessive economic regulation, and shirked their law enforcement duties by allowing vagrancy and petty crime to become the norm. An activist, imperious judiciary has enshrined what was once socially unacceptable behavior into "rights," and has cut away historical property rights in the name of the public weal. Credit also a faithless and perverse elite who have found it chic to reject and injure the very social structure that has fostered their freedoms and their affluence. And finally, the most important contributor has been the lethargic and indolent public, rich beyond comparison with any other peoples of any other era, whose precious

birthright of civil and economic liberties is being sold off piece by piece in return for the thin lentil soup of collectivist promises, class envy, and unprincipled sentimentality. When future historians and archaeologists pick through the ruins of what was once the greatest city in the world and contemplate its spectacular decline, those 13 acres in the heart of Manhattan will be a very good place to start looking for answers.

T. Padraig Higgins is a litigation attorney in New York City who has represented landowners in suits relating to the 42nd Street Redevelopment Project.

Letter From Batavia

by Bill Kauffman

Sports and Local Sovereignty



Since 1940, the Batavia Clippers have played baseball in the lowest of the low minors, the Class A (formerly D) New York-Pennsylvania (née PONY) League. The ballpark, Dwyer Stadium, named for the shoestore owner who served as club president for decades, is just one block from my parents' house, so I've spent many hundreds of lazy summer nights in the bleachers, watching the team run through a series of affiliations (Pirates, Tigers, Indians, Mets, Phillies) while compiling one of the worst cumulative records in the history of the minors.

The NYP is the oldest continuously operating Class A league, and the Clippers are an original franchise. No matter. The major leagues, in their relentless quest to erase every last vestige of individuality and impose a suffocating standardization on the game at all levels, are about to snuff the Clippers—unless we promise to commit an expensive act of vandalism that is the moral equivalent of toppling an ancestor's tombstone.

The Professional Baseball Agreement, which the minors "agreed" to in the way that I agree to give my wallet to a Crip holding a knife to my throat, stamped a

single cookie-cutter mold over more than 150 American cities and their ballclubs. Every last detail of running a team, however niggling—clubhouse showers, parking lots, lighting, the size of the locker room—is covered by the PBA, every last idiosyncrasy smothered.

Batavia, a community-owned team, did its best to comply. The clubhouse was expanded. Brighter lights were installed. The dirt and grass got a manicure. It wasn't enough. The Philadelphia Phillies, the Clippers' parent team, demanded that our field be reconfigured to more closely resemble Philadelphia's 1970 Veterans Stadium, with its boring symmetry. The problem, you see, is that Dwyer's quirky contours made it a hitter's park. The power alley in right-center field measured barely 350 feet, and for 50 years left-handed batters delighted to watch long pop flies turn into home runs.

No more. Our charming little bandbox has been pulled and stretched till it looks like your typical Philadelphia slob, fattened on mounds of inedible cheese-steaks. In 1993, the first summer of our distention, the Clippers finished dead last in the league in home runs.

Yet even this contortion was not enough. Dwyer Stadium's wooden grandstand was built by local workmen under the aegis of the Works Progress Administration, certainly the most constructive agency of the New Deal. It is as sound as most quinquagenarians, but it must come down. So must the first- and third-base bleachers. Dwyer Stadium, handicraft of our grandfathers, the closest thing we've had to an ecumenical gathering place for half a century, must be demolished, else pro baseball will desert Batavia, forever. In Dwyer's place we must erect—with dollars extorted from taxpayers who've never heard of Batavia and are no worse for their ignorance—a spanking new concrete and plastic atrocity.

Theological baseball writing is cloying and phony and almost always the product of guys who throw like girls. Similarly, the much-praised movie about life in the minors, *Bull Durham* (1988), though its auteur Ron Shelton is a former bush-leaguer, rings false. I've known a few of the rouged sluts whose tender ministrations soothe the boys, and I can tell you that while many are prettier than Susan Sarandon, the chance that even one of them reads Blake during idle hours is remoter than Pluto. Neverthe-

less, a religious word—desecration—fits. You don't have to buy the nonsensical *Bull Durham* "church of baseball" conceit to believe that a place at which the generations have gathered in fellowship and seasonal fraternity is made holy.

"We have facilities that are either historic or dumps, depending on how you look at it," says NYP President Bob Julian. There's a junkyard adjacent to Dwyer, and the distinction is easy to make, except perhaps for executives of a monopoly business that is ruled by naked greed and stupid jock malevolence. (Maybe on demolition day we can fill the stands with toddlers and let Vince Coleman toss the dynamite.)

Most of the small Upstate cities in the NYP League—Geneva, Auburn, Watertown—are in the same boat as Batavia, and if the wrecking balls haven't swung by the fall of 1994 we'll be booted out of the league, to be replaced by Canadian burghs with hideous modern stadia.

Why not? The abandonment of provincial American towns by corporate vermin is nothing new. For 20 years we've watched as our largest factories have shut down or flown south, laying off 50- and 60-year-old men who had worked at the plant all their lives and firing salaried employees who were nearing full pensions. This is why thoughtful and decent men sometimes become socialists.

(Then again, they also become anarchists. The county courthouse in Batavia was constructed in 1843 of limestone from nearby quarries. Albany has informed us that it is obsolete and must be replaced because it lacks: one, handicapped access; two, air-conditioning; and three, daycare facilities. Such brutes, our forbears.)

All minor leagues, including the NYP, take great pride in the players they've fed to the big leagues, but this misses the point. I've seen a handful of journeymen you've never heard of—John Knox, Bernardo Brito, Jerry Dybzinski—get their starts, but the only future Hall of Famer I remember is the Milwaukee Brewer Robin Yount, then an ephelic shortstop for the Newark Co-Pilots. In any event, it's impossible to predict which, if any, of the 25 or 30 kids who arrive in Batavia each June will eventually have a cup of coffee in what sissy baseball writers refer to so annoyingly as The Show, and who really cares? Unlike the majors, with their mercenary heroes and sham traditions—mutable as uniforms;

teal today, torn tomorrow?—the continuity in minor league cities is provided by the fans, passing lifetimes in the same bleachers as the cast of players changes annually.

Mr. Dwyer, the stadium's nonagenarian eponym, is at every game, dressed in coat and tie, and when an umpire blows a call he'll let him hear it. So will the old gal who shared her youthful charms with the ballplayers in the 1940's and the wonders of her maturity with the coaches in the 1950's. She's not much in demand anymore, but she's in the grandstand every night, and I like to try to imagine this raspy-voiced, wizened crone as a sassy looker. There is the retarded man whom my dad and his teenage pals used to look out for; now he is grey, a little slow of step, but still here, laboriously keeping score in a notebook. I have shared long wisecracking Dwyer evenings with my boyhood friends since we were eight years old. Someday we'll be interred within hailing distance of each other, and I like to think that unlike the regret-filled corpses of Grover's Corners we'll reminisce unto eternity about the time Brian Lambe stole home in the bottom of the ninth.

Any appeal for the preservation of small joyous things runs into the buzzsaw claim that one's memories are fraudulently idyllic and, besides, "that *Leave It to Beaver* world doesn't exist anymore—if it ever did." This cool and worldly put-down is made, you'll notice, by people whose knowledge of Middle America comes directly from the TV screen, which is why they frame their arguments around the Nielsen top ten. Sandra Bernhard is a star and Donna Reed is dead and that's that.

Yet the America in which homesick shortstops from Texas give worshipful kids from Upstate New York cracked bats and pinches of Red Man in return for dixie cups full of lemonade really does exist, however much it discomforts the New World Orderlies or sounds like the mawkish fabrication of a cynical, huckstering Fifth Avenue ad-man. (In the infamous summer of 1993 the Lords of Baseball outlawed chewing tobacco in the minors—but not the majors. Another disposable custom.)

So there we are: either Batavia begs, borrows, and mostly steals \$2 million to raze Dwyer and build an eyesore, or the Batavia Clippers die. The nickname Clipper, by the way, comes from the har-vesting machine manufactured by

Massey-Harris, Batavia's chief employer at the time of the team's founding. Massey-Harris pulled out of town in 1958, leaving vacant an enormous and grimy plant right across from our pioneer cemetery. It's the bottom of the ninth for the rural rustbelt, and with those pushed-back fences a grand slam seems mighty improbable.

Bill Kauffman is author of the novel Every Man a King.

Letter From Nicaragua

by Ray Lowry

Signs of the Sandinistas



The mural is old and faded, a reminder of headier days when the world looked ripe for violent revolution. Three years of neglect, the effects of a tropical climate, and petty vandalism have combined to give the mural its present appearance of a long-forgotten billboard along some abandoned stretch of rural highway. Yet the huge faces painted on the mountainside, Carlos Fonseca, Daniel Ortega, and Augusto Sandino—founder, unseated *cuadillo*, and namesake respectively of Nicaragua's Sandinista National Liberation Front—still glower at those making the border-crossing into Nicaragua at Los Manos.

The crossing causes but a ten-minute delay in your journey thanks to an efficient and friendly group of customs employees. You change your money into Nicaraguan cordobas and are surprised to learn that they have a value roughly equal to the Honduran lempiras you have been spending these past days—about 15 U.S. cents. This is the new *cordoba de oro* or gold cordoba, of course. The old silver cordoba has a value exactly equal to that which it possessed in the Sandinista days—*nada*.

You climb into the canvas-covered back of the two-and-a-half-ton Isuzu truck that serves as a bus, pay your three-cordoba fare, and you're off to Ocotal, a small market town about 15 miles down

the highway. The countryside is lush, green, cool, and perpetually bathed in a fine mountain mist. The weather is great. It's hard to believe that you are in the tropics in June. You climb aboard an old school bus in Ocotal with the words "Storm Lake Community Schools" still painted on the sides. After paying your six-cordoba fare you continue down the mountain highway to Estelí, the first town of any size you come to in Nicaragua.

Your Central American guidebook points out that the pleasant mountain climate of Estelí made it a favorite pilgrimage site for "internacionalista volunteers" during the Sandinista years. Gangs of would-be revolutionaries descended on the place during the 1980's and covered its walls with propaganda murals. Since the election of Violeta Chamorro as president in 1990, the foreign "volunteers" have all but disappeared from Estelí and the murals are fading. The few *internacionalista*-types that still arrive—like the longhaired, effeminate man and the two shorthaired, "butch" women you met at the Cordoba hotel where you took a room—are shunned by the locals who refer to them as "*los inbanables*," or the unbathable ones.

As you walk about town you notice that Sandinista campaign slogans from the 1990 election are still visible everywhere. "*Con Daniel todo será mejor*." (With Daniel everything will be better.) Yet even die-hard Sandinista supporters in Estelí—one of only two towns in Nicaragua where the Sandinistas won a majority of votes in 1990—reluctantly concede that everything is better *without* Daniel and the Sandinistas. The town is filled with well-stocked shops and small pleasant restaurants that weren't here just a few years ago. And unlike during the Sandinista years, you can actually make purchases with the local currency, rather than with American dollars. True, many businesses seem incapable of making change for even the smallest of bills. But the business climate is coming back from the dead. There's no doubt about it.

The *Galeria de Héroes y Mártires* and the Sandinista *Casa de Cultura* are closed. And this is a Saturday night! So what do the common people of Estelí—the ones for whom the Sandinista Front purported to have made its revolution—do on a weekend? Well, about a thousand of them are packed into the huge

cathedral. The Roman Catholic Church is thriving in post-revolutionary Nicaragua. Meanwhile, the "Popular Front Church" created by the Sandinistas as a means of diffusing support for the Catholic Church has shriveled to a small band of fanatics who travel the country disrupting traditional church services.

The next morning a three-hour journey in another old school bus brings you down several thousand feet in altitude and spirit to Managua, a sprawling dump of a place. And it's hot. A dead hot, sea-level city without hope of an ocean breeze. Central Managua was destroyed by an earthquake in 1972 and has yet to be rebuilt. Millions in foreign aid poured in following the earthquake, but every dime was pocketed by dictator Anastasio Somoza. An additional decade of neglect by the Sandinistas served only to exacerbate the problem. The earthquake zone is currently a no-man's land filled with little squatter shanties. The rest of the city is a sprawling jumble of roads that run every which way. Chaos. Pure chaos. Luckily, the bus drops you off at a huge open-air market where one can catch buses to other parts of the country. You hop on a bus bound for Granada and go.

You open the latest issue of *La Presna* and read that the 16th cache of arms has been discovered. Like the others, this one belongs to the Marxist guerrillas of El Salvador and has been maintained for them by the Nicaraguan army. President Chamorro wants answers, but army chief Humberto Ortega, brother of former Sandinista dictator Daniel Ortega, isn't providing any. He simply says that the arms were "forgotten." Meanwhile, *Barricada*, the Sandinistas' daily newspaper, points out that 13 of the 16 bunkers were all but empty. It doesn't inform its readers, however, that the other three contained hundreds of mortar shells, rocket-propelled grenades, and Claymore mines and tens of thousands of AK-47 rounds. The most recently discovered bunker contained *thousands of pounds of C-4*!

The ride to Granada is hot but lovely. The bus passes hundreds of little individual farms. Some of the fields are being worked with ox-drawn plows. Much of the resulting produce is transported along the highway in horsecarts. Still, many of these folks are purchasing secondhand tractors and pickup trucks. Just a few short years ago most were little

better than subsistence-farming peasants. Now they are in business.

Granada is a grand town built on the shores of a great lake—Lake Nicaragua. It was the first Spanish settlement of any size in Nicaragua and still possesses a great deal of colonial charm, despite having been sacked a dozen times by pirates, plunderers, and revolutionaries. You ride from the bus station to the lovely central square in a horse-drawn stagecoach passing adorable tile-roofed houses. The wide, paved streets are shaded by huge mango and ceiba trees.

You take a room at another cheap hotel. This one costs 20 cordobas. And like the hotel in Estelí, this one has a few scruffy "gringos" staying there. A couple of limp-wristed men and two more dikes. They try to propagandize you about the great proletarian struggle until you inform them that you came to Nicaragua to celebrate the *counter*revolution. They call you a "fascist." You smile at these last remnants of the American hard-left—James' "longhaired men and shorthaired women." Hormonal (and societal) rejects.

That evening you stroll down to the waterfront where you encounter an unusual statue of Captain Don Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba, founder of Granada and namesake of Nicaragua's monetary unit. The statue itself is not so unusual. It's the brass commemoration plate: the inscription reads that the statue was "Presented to the President of the Republic of Nicaragua _____ by Chief of State of Spain Don Francisco Franco. . . ." The missing words from the commemoration plate, chiseled off with a powerful grinder yet still readable, are "Anastasio Somoza." Orwell meets Ortega.

The next morning you find yourself on another old school bus heading to San Jorge, a small lakeshore town an hour south of Granada. And tied up at the pier, just as you'd been promised in Granada, you find *La Senora del Lago*, an old tub of a boat that makes a daily run to Ometepe, the volcanic island that shoots up nearly 5,000 feet from the surface of the lake. You pay your three-and-a-half-cordoba fare and climb aboard, taking a seat with about 50 other passengers among tons of freight. The 90-minute ride is delightful, in spite of the fact that the baby seated in the lap of the woman next to you throws up on you. No problem. You simply take off your shirt and drag it in the clear lake wa-

ter. You set it in the sun and it is dry by the time you reach the island.

You take a room at the little hotel near the wharf. The price is 15 cordobas, or 20 if you want a table fan in your room. It's about 110 degrees, so you opt for the fan. There is no running water in this hotel. The "shower" consists of a cubicle where one can dip buckets of water out of a rain barrel. The toilet facility consists of an honest-to-God outhouse. The clientele of this hotel is entirely female and middle-aged. "*Donde están los hombres?*" Where are the men? you ask. "At home," they reply. And why? "Because we are on vacation." Okay, okay. You sit down in a cane rocking chair with these ladies and lazily rock the day away discussing recipes and watching *novelas*, or soap operas, on the hotel's television set. Hillary Clinton wouldn't like this bunch of gals.

The boat makes its return trip at six o'clock the following morning. You quickly hop aboard another old school bus, and by ten you find yourself back in Managua. It's already 100 degrees. Hot. Way too hot. You immediately board a bus headed for Matagalpa and fan yourself madly with that morning's edition of *Barricada*. (Who said the newspaper isn't good for anything?) Within an hour you are heading into the mountains, and the temperature drops about 25 degrees. As you cruise through one broad, flat-bottomed river valley you notice a school with a sign in Spanish that reads "The Mikhail Gorbachev School of Mechanized Agriculture." Within the valley are a number of former Sandinista rice cooperatives that have either been abandoned or privatized since 1990. By early afternoon you reach the pleasant mountain town of Matagalpa.

The area around Matagalpa saw a great deal of revolutionary activity during the uprising that unseated Somoza. The Sandinistas later forced unwilling *campesinos* onto cooperatives, thereby giving birth to a great deal of counterrevolutionary, or "contra," activity during the 1980's. Like in Estelí, shops and restaurants are springing up everywhere. But unlike in Estelí, the people here are quite willing to express their disgust with the Ortega clan. The Sandinistas are killing the ex-contras, they say. They are undermining the peace process in neighboring El Salvador. The economy is being sabotaged. No wonder the *muchachos* are returning to the hills. . . .

Indeed, the latest news involves two

more political assassinations. Another ex-contra has been rubbed out. So too has an agricultural expert who had been overseeing the reprivatization of lands seized during the Sandinista years. According to President Chamorro, over 100 former contras and civilian resistance leaders have been mysteriously murdered by gangs of armed men during the past year. Does this make the papers back home? Or are "death squads" only news when they can be tied to the political right?

The general consensus is that some 20 percent of the Nicaraguan people still strongly support the Sandinistas. Meanwhile, the UNO (United Nicaraguan Opposition) coalition that united behind Violeta Chamorro and unseated the Sandinistas in 1990 has completely fallen apart. By election time this year, the coalition may have broken into as many as 15 different parties. The Liberal Party alone has split into four warring factions. The Conservatives are divided six ways. Even the Social Christian Party—itsself little more than a faction—is fractured. It is conceivable that the Sandinista Front could emerge from the elections holding the largest single block of votes!

Factional politics has long been a curse in Nicaragua. Time and again, the inability of those on any one side to close ranks around a single candidate has created political vacuums that are quickly and easily filled by armed groups of thugs—Somoza's *Guardia Nacional* in the old days; the Sandinista Front more recently.

You arise bright and early the next morning and walk down to the *mercado* in the cool mountain air. The surrounding mountain tops are bathed in thick clouds, though the mist in the valleys is starting to clear. You hop on a bus to Estelí and ride for two hours up the pleasant little mountain highway. By the time you reach Estelí, the morning fog has cleared and the skies are as blue as can be. It's a perfect 75-degree day. A quick bus change brings you to Ocotal, the small market town where you immediately hop aboard a two-and-a-half-ton Isuzu truck bound for the Honduran frontier.

The border formalities are as easy leaving Nicaragua as they were coming. The customs officials are pleasant and professional. You get your passport stamped, then change your Nicaraguan cordobas for Honduran lempiras. Yet as

you walk toward the Honduran immigration station you can't help feeling a bit uneasy. It's those eyes. The eyes on the mountainside. You're leaving Nicaragua under the harsh stare of Carlos Fonseca, Daniel Ortega, and Augusto Sandino, and it doesn't feel good. You take a final glance over your shoulder at these three as you cross into Honduras. "We'll be back!" they seem to be saying.

Ray Lowry writes from the island of Roatan in Honduras, where he is a teacher at a bilingual primary school.

Letter From the Philippines

by Kelly Cherry

Crossing a Street in Manila



The creative writing students in the small seminar room at Ateneo University in Metro Manila were answering my question about the relation of language to politics in the Philippines. With that youthful energy that is each generation's greatest natural resource they talked about the "feudal system" Filipinos have lived under, about the centrality of village life, about the Filipino's innately "romantic" soul and love of theater. The electric power had gone off—brownouts were lasting up to seven hours a day—and, in late May, the room's temperature quickly soared. Just as suddenly, a rainstorm rushed across the sky, as if in a hurry to get somewhere else; afterwards, flame trees and acacias seemed to lean in the direction it had gone, like lovers left behind at a train station.

I was explaining to the class that anything might be the subject of a short-short. "A door," I said, pointing at the door through which we had entered. "Or a table." I touched the table around which we were grouped. "This morning," I admitted, "it occurred to me that one might write a short-short about crossing a street in Manila." The students laughed. "That's not a short-short," one said. "That's a novel! A saga! An *epic*, at least!"

Because of the brownouts, traffic lights often did not work. Sometimes there were police to direct the flow of traffic, and sometimes there were not. I had been making my way with a group of faculty women from St. Scholastica's College to a fast-food Chinese restaurant. I have traveled a lot and have never met a warmer, friendlier, more welcoming people than Filipinos. A good thing, too, I thought, as I imagined, marooned there on the traffic island, that I might have to give up all hope of returning home. I would marry, become a citizen and cast my defiant but losing vote for Miriam Santiago, and grow old on my own little "island" among the more than 7,000 that make up the archipelago that is the Philippines. All around me were trucks, cars, taxicabs, jeepneys, tricycles, and pedicabs. Pedicabs are bicycles with sidecars; tricycles are motorcycles with sidecars; jeepneys, ostensibly another method of public transportation, are a mobile art form. This really is recycling. Jeeps left over from World War II are painted in elaborate, colorful detail, outfitted with model horses, dressed in flags and pennants, draped with purple curtains, and named. *Banana Magnet*, said one. *Desert*, said another, as if it were the punch line to a running, or rolling, joke. *Last Waltz* was the mournful title of a third. Then there was the jeepney that demanded, pugnaciously, *Saint or Sinner*: I felt put on the spot.

At St. Scholastica's I had read a paper on the short fiction of women in the United States today. Everywhere I went, I met Filipino writers and scholars who were not only acquainted with the work of American writers—they were frequently acquainted with the writers themselves. A number had been to the International Writing Workshop in Iowa City. Ed and Edith Tiempo recalled being in Paul Engle's class alongside the now late Flannery O'Connor. Mimeographing was expensive back then, Edith Tiempo said, so the students read their stories aloud in class. But they had to ask Engle to read O'Connor's stories for her, because no one could understand that Georgia accent. "She had an annoying habit of twisting a lock of hair at her forehead," Edith said, laughing softly, adding that when Engle found unconvincing a sex scene O'Connor had written the author responded, "Come out to my car and I'll show you how it's done."

I loved these stories and scribbled them down in my spiral notebook at night in my wonderful room in the Manila Hotel, where the MacArthur Suite can be booked for \$1,400 a day and often is—by the Japanese, who, presumably, think \$1,400 a day is not too much to pay for the right to report to their friends that they have slept in the MacArthur Suite. From my more modest room I could look out at Manila Bay with its twinkling cargo ships, the world coming and going and always bigger than I'd dreamed. It is stories like this that link us, make us members of a larger literary community. Gossip makes us real to one another.

Another writer, F. Sionil José, prolific and outspoken, whose *Three Filipino Women* was recently published in the United States by Random House, explained to me that Melville and Emerson are the American writers "relevant" to him, because they made an *American* tradition, "throwing off the colonial influence." He likes the contemporary black writers for the same reason.

Weaving—amazingly—among the cars were adults and children selling single sticks of gum, cigarettes, anything. A boy tapped on a window and opened his palm, begging. No doubt he lived, if he had any address at all, in the poor-beyond-saying Tondo district. I could say how seeing him made me feel, but I can't say how he felt. The Filipino writers will have to tell us that. Every country finds its own words. And out of those words it constructs an idea of itself. Literature, also, makes us real to one another.

At the University of the Philippines, the splendidly lively National Artist Fran-

cisco Arcellana ("That means I get to be buried for free") pointed out that deconstructionist theory comes from the French—"an overrefined culture," he said nicely.

To be in search of a language with which to define one's sense of oneself, one's entire country—how exciting! And here in the West we are so eager to discard what we know that we turn a deaf ear even to our own words, eliminating the text, the author, the authoritative voice. I began to understand the lure of the East, the temptation to believe in something besides criticism.

Arcellana was inducting students into the UP Writing Club. He made them raise their right hands. "I promise to write, *write*, WRITE," he had them repeat after him. "And never be silenced!"

I was clutching a light canvas bag a former student had made for me. She had printed my name on one side and the cover art from one of my novels on the other, and I used the bag to carry the books I would be giving readings from. I was also carrying my paper on women writers. And I was also carrying a Sport-sac bag that held my money and passport and cosmetics and sunglasses and sunscreen. I was clutching this stuff and standing there, in the middle of a street in Manila, and waiting for traffic to slacken, and these are some of the thoughts I was thinking.

Why did the writer cross the road? It was never simply to get to the other side.

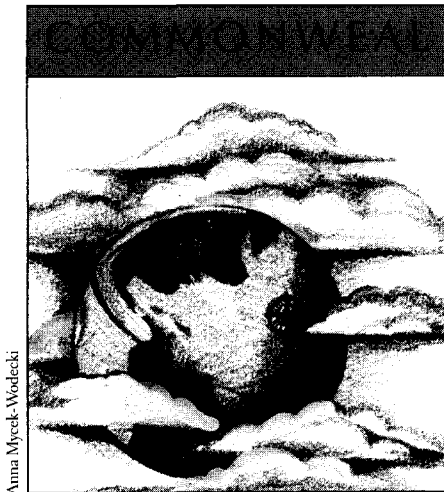
Kelly Cherry is a writer living in Madison, Wisconsin. Her collection of poetry God's Loud Hand was recently published by Louisiana State University Press.

LIBERAL ARTS

THE SCIENCE OF COMPETITION

As a result of the recent economic downturn and reduction in federal support of both military and nonmilitary research, jobs for Ph.D.'s in science and engineering are increasingly scarce. Dr. David L. Goodstein, a physicist and vice provost of the California Institute of Technology, worries in the *American Scholar* about the repercussions of more and more scientists competing for fewer and fewer research dollars.

Graduate and undergraduate science majors, for example, are choosing careers as management consultants and Wall Street analysts rather than as laboratory researchers. Yet most university labs have survived despite the absence of American students, as research positions are filled more and more by foreign students—some of whom benefit from federal grants and subsidies to the universities. As Goodstein writes, "Congress and the public don't seem yet to have noticed that, while largely ignoring our own students, we are putting our money and our best talent into training our economic competitors."



Anna Myreck-Wodecki

Real Independence Day

by Richard J. Davis

The Meaning of the Second Amendment

There is no national holiday on April 19 (or April 18), though the Boston Marathon is run around this time. When I was in college in the East this meant not only mid-spring but mid-term, and when exams were finished, the anniversary of Paul Revere's ride seemed a perfect excuse for a party. Though I've celebrated this date habitually over the years, the party spirit has faded a bit with age, and I've begun to reflect a little more on those events and people of 1775. What went on in the minds of these small-town farmers that made them stand up and challenge the army of "their" government—coincidentally the most powerful one on earth at that time? Were they pushed to it accidentally, or had they already drawn the line beyond which they would stand and fight?

It's a question that may relate to today more than we realize. Our government is, at least for now, undoubtedly the

most powerful in the world. It holds power that those Massachusetts farmers couldn't have imagined. It intrudes in our lives to a degree that would have astonished and appalled them. Are we drawing a mental line of how far we'll let it go? Are we waiting until somebody unintentionally pushes us too far? Are we past standing up for our rights altogether? It's hard to tell.

There are several movements, both within and without the government, aimed at disarming the American population. The argument seems to be that we are so civilized that we have no good use for such things as firearms. In 1775, the goal of the British troops marching on Concord was similar—to disarm the colonists. They weren't after individual, personal weapons; they were after cannons and large stores of gunpowder rumored to be at Concord. (With the limited technology of the day, cannons were the largest technological advantage the British had over the colonists.)

The government today has numerous large technological advantages over the civilian population. There remain a substantial number of heavily regulated, registered weapons in private hands, but the closest thing to technological parity is the common semiautomatic weapon available to the general public. It is this class, mislabeled "assault weapons," that currently comes under the most vigorous attack from gun-control advocates both inside and outside government. The usual attack centers around the "fact" that they have "no sporting uses."

Ignoring the inaccuracy of this "fact," the truth is that the Second Amendment makes no reference to "sporting uses." In fact, it seems most unlikely that "sporting uses" were a consideration for those who framed the Bill of Rights. Unfortunately, even the National Rifle Association skirts timidly around the real issue, as if it were too much for Americans to deal with. The point of the Second Amendment is to give American citizens the capability to assemble rapidly as an armed militia for their own collective defense. This has generally been thought of as defense against an invading foreign enemy, but recent events in Los Angeles and Waco

clearly point out that other situations might also create such a need. To the Framers of the Bill of Rights, the most recent "foreign enemy" was the perceived tyranny of their *own government*—in England, but nonetheless at that time (1775) their own. A great concern of the writers of the Bill of Rights was that the government they were then forming might eventually become tyrannical, and that the citizens needed protection from that possibility—hence the entire Bill of Rights including the Second Amendment.

There are past examples of armed citizen resistance to the perceived tyranny of the U.S. government: the Whiskey Rebellion, Shays' Rebellion, and most notably the War Between the States. The fact that none of these was successful does nothing to alter the principle of armed resistance as a last resort. The fact that a large number of citizens exercise their Second Amendment rights unquestionably admits the possibility of future armed resistance and can properly be a sobering thought for those in government. The amount of support for gun control within the government (those sworn to uphold and defend the Constitution, *including* the Bill of Rights, *including* the Second Amendment) perhaps indicates that this is indeed the case. As the existence of our nuclear missiles served as a brake on Soviet ambitions for 45 years, so a well-armed populace must serve as a brake on those in government who might abuse their authority.

The removal of firearms from civilian hands removes this restraint from government. However small the actual possibility of revolt, whatever the theories that we are "too civilized" to need or want firearms, the fact remains that the ultimate guarantor of political power, here as anywhere else in the world, is the possession of (and willingness and ability to use if necessary) firearms. Without that, not only is resistance to unjust laws or abuse of power impossible, but enforcement of *just* laws is impossible.

Does this mean that we need to plan for armed resistance? Hardly. The odds are far less even than in 1860. Only massive public support for resistance would

give it a chance of success, and such support could well prevent the need for resistance through political means. Only a blatant usurpation of power in excess of authority might try to override such resistance, and the coup attempt in Russia illustrates that massive resistance can succeed even with little or no violence.

Maybe we *do* need to give more thought to where we draw the line. How much power do we really grant to the federal government? If the power is accumulated gradually enough, it may not be blatant enough to inspire massive resistance. In that case a smaller group might be suddenly and accidentally pushed beyond its limit and provide the tragedy of a Lexington-like spark, with violent, armed resistance the final result. In either case, without the Second Amendment we lose much of our option to resist. Even the most massive nonviolent resistance becomes fatally or near-fatally weak without the threat of *armed* resistance to back it. Two old quotes come to mind: "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance" and "Those who give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." It's time we paid a little more attention to where we stand before it's too late.

Here on the Eastern Shore, guns are a way of life. People like to hunt, people like to shoot, and people like to collect guns out of historical or aesthetic interest. Most small towns could easily arm an infantry company out of private collections, and small cities could probably arm a regiment—possibly including automatic or other heavy weapons. There are no militia groups, but organization could occur around fire companies, fraternal organizations, gun clubs, and even veterans' organizations if the provocation were severe enough.

I doubt I will ever have to stand and literally fight for my rights. I hope I don't. If it's going to happen, I hope it happens after my lifetime, after my children's lifetimes, and, if and when they arrive, after my grandchildren's lifetimes. I suspect that's about as many generations ahead as we're capable of worrying about.

At the same time, I wonder if that isn't what those Massachusetts farmers felt in 1775. No doubt resistance to the British Army looked as hopeless to them as resistance to the federal government does to me. But if it does come to lining up on the village green, I hope I'll have

the courage to stand with my neighbors—and they the courage to stand with me—to make sure America stays a free country of free people.

We celebrate that freedom on the Fourth of July, but those words of July Fourth were created by the actions of those men in April 1775. In my mind, that's the real holiday, in the original sense of the word.

Richard J. Davis writes from Hurlock, Maryland.

Waco in Moscow

by Yuri N. Maltsev

The standoff between President Yeltsin and the Russian Parliament ended in flames and gunfire that can be compared to the sad scenes of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas. Even the scare tactic of round-the-clock rap music was emulated by Russian *spetsnats* troops. Having crushed his opponents, Mr. Yeltsin returned Russia to its familiar state of one-man rule. This was to officially last until the December 11 elections and then informally continue under the fig leaf of a new "democratically elected" parliament. With his main opponents Messrs. Rutskoi and Khasbulatov locked in the infamous KGB Lefortovo prison, the election campaign will be a mock tournament between Mr. Yeltsin's *very* ardent and *most* ardent supporters.

Immediately after his "Wacoization" of the parliament, Mr. Yeltsin purged his other enemies, who by chance of fate were outside the Moscow White House. The second round of repression ousted the Supreme Court Chairman, the Prosecutor-General, and dozens of provincial leaders and local bureaucrats. The *tour-de-force* was staged right—Russians were reminded that Mr. Yeltsin, irrespective of his image as an indecisive and reflective casual drinker, can easily turn back into the Ivan the Terrible of the Moscow bureaucracy, the role he played successfully during his tenure as First Secretary of the Moscow Party organization from 1985 to 1987. Today, the former Politburo member is trying to emulate Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet in establishing an anticommunist, benevolent dictatorship with the

declared aim of making a long-awaited transition to a market economy.

As paradoxical as it sounds, democracy in postcommunist nations is essentially an antimarket phenomenon. Westerners have observed with dismay how by the formally democratic process, communists—the most explicit enemies of both the free market and democracy—have come back to power in Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Azerbaijan, and other postcommunist countries. The blame for these developments should rest, to a large extent, on anticommunist reformers themselves for being indecisive and halfhearted in pursuing the cause of freedom. This indecisiveness has prolonged the agony of socialism and its corresponding hardships for the people. Former communists and other antidemocratic forces, including those recently deposed in Moscow and those who are still prospering in the provinces, would exploit this lack of reform and pin the blame on the nonexistent free market.

Misguided by old-style communist propaganda punctuated by Western advice to go slowly, phase in freedom step-by-step, and embrace piecemeal changes as liberty, the ordinary Russian, Tatar, or Kalmyk has no immunity against the deadly bacilli of socialism. The only immunity against a slave mentality is private property. Making the right to private property indispensable is the only real basis for true Jeffersonian democracy. Before the establishment of property rights, democracy in the postcommunist world is a liberal delusion, a dangerous utopia that is as illogical, phony, and disastrous as socialism itself. "People without property are slaves," Alexis de Tocqueville warned us 170 years ago. Slaves are deprived of choices, which differentiates them from free people. Without private property, any talk about democracy in Russia is meaningless.

Elections to the burned parliament were the first grandiose political show staged by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1989 to impress the West and his own people that Russia was getting over its communist congresses and was to be ruled from then on by the same democratic principles as the welfare democracies of the West. Being one of his misguided subjects on this matter, I decided to run and was even nominated by several "working collectives" (one of the requirements of the show) in the Proletarski District of Moscow. But my career

as a people's deputy in Gorbachev's parliament never materialized, because the filters established by the election committee automatically rejected anyone whose loyalty to socialism and Gorbachev could be questioned—although it wisely included a handful of visible dissidents as a token opposition.

The real reason for playing the parliament game was to create a body of support for Mr. Gorbachev outside the Politburo and Communist Party apparatus, which were antagonistic to *perestroika*. Paradoxically, the first “democratically elected” Russian legislature had a higher content of communists (80 percent) than those autocratically appointed by Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev (usually below 50 percent). The real choice the people of Russia faced at the polling boxes in 1989 was between hard-line Stalinist communists and reformed and soft-spoken Gorbachev communists.

And so Gorbachev-style communists were elected, as well as Stalinists who won in rural districts where people were hoarded into polling stations the same way their fathers had been hoarded into collective farms or the dreadful gulag. A handful of dissidents known in the West and used by Gorbachev to give an impression of legitimacy to his government (and even more important, eligibility for Western foreign-aid handouts) were included as token liberals. Their role in parliament was downplayed by its leaders, Vice President Rutskoi and Speaker Khasbulatov. These are the people whom Yeltsin asked to “cease and desist” on September 21 and “Wacoized” on October 4.

It was not a surprise that Yeltsin's “coup” was immediately denounced as “foolish,” “antidemocratic,” and “unjustifiable” by the real father of this parliament, Mikhail Gorbachev, and his fellow socialists from Moscow to Amherst, Massachusetts. For example, Stephen Cohen, who is consistently wrong on any issue he talks about—and therefore probably valued highly in certain circles—was appointed the director of Russian studies at Princeton University and a CNN consultant. Given this opportunity to be a regular “lying head” on Russia, Cohen commented on Yeltsin's decision: “There is no more democracy in Russia.” Was it there before? Obviously not, but in Cohen's mind, it was a socialist democracy of which the people of Russia should be proud. A former writer for the *Kommunist*, the main propaganda

magazine of the Politburo that ceased publication with the end of the Communist Party, Cohen switched to CNN, a hard-currency payer.

The events after the “Yeltsin coup” of 1993 showed that Yeltsin's calculations proved correct. Besides Gorbachev and Western academic Stalinists, only a tiny, pathetic group of old-age Stalinists and teenage products of the socialist public school system supported the “People's deputies” in Russia. The tragic story of this second Russian Revolution tells us that it is impossible to proceed gradually and phase in freedom step-by-step. Numerous warnings from Western governments, the IMF, and all kinds of well-wishers on the left against the “shock therapy” approach to economic and political reforms in postcommunist countries led, in the case of Russia, to “shock without therapy”—numerous hardships for the people without *any* significant progress on the transition to a market economy. The end of the socialist parliament now deprives Yeltsin of any further excuses not to pursue the path of economic freedom. Only time will show whether Yeltsin sacrificed the “democratic” facade of his regime for the substance of the free market.

That the economic situation in Russia is going from bad to worse is already a tautology. The Consumer Price Index in Russia listed the inflation rate to be over 700 percent in the first nine months of 1993 instead of the “promised” 100 percent. The value of money is diminishing so rapidly that cash is physically scarce. Russia does not have the printing capacity to keep up with demand. The budget deficit exceeded 45 percent of the estimated GDP. Production dropped 15 percent last year and continues to shrink. Contrary to the basics of Keynesian economics, we witness simultaneous increases in prices and fall-offs in production and employment.

The essence of socialism is public ownership, and without dismantling this system none of the economic “reforms” of Yeltsin's government will ever work. At the most general level, the goals of privatization are twofold: one, to introduce a society based on economic freedom and the democratic rule of law; and two, to increase the efficiency of the national economy. “The acceptance of a private property-based economy is—not unexpectedly—the last line of defense of the old order,” states Larisa Piyasheva, the only visible free-market economist in

present-day Russia. Fired by Yeltsin's government because of “budget cuts,” she rightly believes that privatization alone will not solve all of Russia's problems, but she realizes that without it there is absolutely no hope for improvement. The Russian government's recently adopted program for “privatization” leads neither to private property nor to private ownership, but rather intends to create a “mixed,” or collective, property owner, essentially leaving property rights a monopoly of the state. The fact that private ownership dominates the most efficient economies of the West points unmistakably to the economic inferiority of “collective property,” leasing, and cooperatives as an ownership solution.

Progressive taxation with an upper tax bracket of 60 percent was introduced, while the new sales tax rate was set at 28 percent. This “free market” approach means every new reform causes perverse public responses and that every new law ostensibly passed to increase freedom only increases opportunities for fines and bribes. Russia's prisons, probably the worst in the world, are still filled with over 100,000 entrepreneurs, most convicted for commercial and business practices absolutely legal in civilized countries. As popular Russian journalist Viktor Kopin assesses the present stage of the “Capitalist Revolution” in Russia: “The ‘White Guard’ attack on socialism failed. We have gotten a quasi-democratic society with quasi-market, quasi-legality, quasi-morale. The predominant conclusion is that freedom leads to the devastation of spirituality, crime, pauperization of the masses, and emergence of a class of fat cats.”

The short-term possibilities for foreign investment in Russia remain quite limited. The business climate will continue to be intolerably risky as long as investors must worry about economic instability, lack of reliable currency, political conflicts, and uncertainty about the future of the Russian empire. Until the Kremlin adopts civilized practices and laws on investment, the prospects for joint ventures and similar forms of cooperation will remain grim. Yeltsin's government has chosen (or was forced to choose by the hard-liners in parliament), the least daring, least radical of the reform options available. As my former colleague at the Russian Academy of Sciences, Yevgeni Yasin, admits, “The influence of politics on the economy has

now reached its greatest possible dimension."

A comprehensive program of transition to a market economy should include the privatization of industrial and agricultural property; provisions for free trade in shares at newly created stock exchanges; the denationalization of land; the creation of labor markets through the elimination of existing restrictions on the freedom of labor to contract; the immediate demunicipalization of housing; drastic cuts in military and other government spending; monetary reform aimed at achieving the convertibility of the currency in international money markets; and the liberalization of foreign trade.

The failure of socialism in Russia, combined with the enormous suffering and hardship of the people in all of the so-called socialist countries, is a powerful warning for the West against socialism, statism, and government interventionism. It is beyond the abilities of eco-

nomie analysis to calculate the opportunity-cost of the socialist experiment in Russia, but the human toll is estimated by historian Roy Medvedev at 41 million people who perished in the gulag during Stalin's collectivizations, purges, campaigns against "unearned" incomes, and other devilish experiments. But "the only lesson of history is that it does not teach us anything," says a popular Russian aphorism. And it certainly seems true. "Despite the recent collapse of socialism and communism in Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe, socialism is still alive and growing," says Nobel laureate Gary Becker. Socialism clearly still presents a mortal danger to economic freedom and the quality of life for us and generations to come.

Yuri N. Maltsev, associate professor of economics at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin, was an economic advisor to Mikhail Gorbachev's government.

Food, Felons, and Foreign Aid

by Robert Weissberg

A New Approach to Trade and Punishment

America's attempts to help the former Soviet Union have proven exceptionally frustrating. Nearly all government officials, Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives, realize that something ought to be done. The possibility that continued economic crises will mean a return to a belligerent totalitarian state is both reasonable and justifiably dreaded. Even the most coldhearted lifelong anticommunist cannot enjoy seeing mobs of angry Russians protesting in the streets.

Unfortunately, we are stupefied about

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what is to be done. Clearly, save a sudden catastrophe, a traditional Marshall Plan-type foreign aid package is unacceptable. Rebuilding the old Soviet system would require trillions in government aid at a time when demands for domestic investment cannot be ignored. Even a worldwide effort involving Japan and Germany would be insufficient and risky for the respective governments. Private sector help ultimately may be the solution, but presently this is a drop in the proverbial bucket. In short, the current situation resembles a picture of horrified bystanders helplessly watching a sinking ship loaded with toxic chemicals.

The situation is not, however, as hopeless as it may initially appear. The problem is that we have conceptualized the U.S.-former Soviet Union relationship in terms of either outright gifts or trade involving tangible commodities. Past experience leads us to think instinctively of handouts or trading, say, food or trucks for metals or oil. We have already mentioned the futility of cash advances. And, given that exports either are scarce within Russia or would take years to become commercially available, trade is not a quick solution. There is also the problem of introducing capitalist economics into a bureaucratic state still populated by those who believe free markets to be exploitation.

The secret is to think in terms of services, not the typical tangible items of trade. We must ask, "What exportable

service does the former Soviet Union possess that is of value to the United States?" Once we take this approach, and expend some modest thought, the answer is plain—the Soviet Union rightfully enjoys the reputation of the world's foremost expert in the arts of oppression and citizen control. What Saudi Arabia is to oil, what Japan is to consumer electronics, the Kremlin is to ruthless citizen control, especially of citizens at the bottom of the economic heap. A program of brutal repression stamped "Made in the U.S.S.R." is the equivalent of "Made in France" on a bottle of perfume or "Ten-Day Tour of Fabulous Bangkok" for sex-starved Japanese businessmen. Among connoisseurs of such matters, the Soviet label proclaims the genuine article, a commitment to effectiveness not to be confused with cheap imitations from, say, Red China or some Johnny-come-lately Islamic fundamentalist state. Indeed, a passion for excellence in the arts of citizen control long predates the communist regime. As the Shah unfortunately discovered, quality in such matters cannot be achieved in a mere decade.

At this point the reader may ask, "Why would anybody want to buy repression, even if of the highest grade? After all, the end of repression was what the Cold War was about. We spent billions to rid ourselves of it." Such a reader, clearly, must be unaware of what has been transpiring in the American judicial system. We are, to put it mildly, overwhelmed with criminality—our prisons are overcrowded, our courts are overwhelmed, and our police are outmanned and outgunned in the war against violent hooliganism. What we need is oppression, albeit of a more focused variety than the traditional product, and the former Soviet Union now possesses an enormous over-supply of that product. To borrow a slogan from the early 1960's, the oppression gap must be closed.

The easiest way to begin is concretely, with prisons. Though precise figures are not available, it must be true that the collapse of Marxism has resulted in a surplus of empty cells and unemployed guards, wardens, and psychiatric counselors. Not only could our use of underutilized space and infrastructure relieve overcrowding in American prisons, but a transfer of inmates to the Soviet Union would save the American taxpayers hundreds of millions while revitalizing a traditional mainstay of the Soviet economy.

Rather than pay \$30,000 or more to house a prisoner in Joliet, the Federal Bureau of Prisons could pay, say, Russian jailers maybe \$5,000. Given their great and cost-effective skill at housing guests of the state, even \$5,000 per year per inmate would generate sufficient profit to heat up hundreds of local economies. Money would also arrive from gifts sent abroad by friends and relatives of inmates. The black market in imported American cigarettes and jeans would provide valuable lessons in trade and marketing. Housing American prisoners in Siberia would amount to a multibillion-dollar aid program undertaken gleefully by the people of America. So profitable might this enterprise become that Russian jailers would surely keep their guests for extended stays by insisting on full rehabilitation. No muddleheaded bleeding-heart time off for good behavior or early release programs. Delegations of ex-KGB members armed with colorful brochures would roam U.S. courts drumming up business much like Midwestern small-town economic development committees chase California high-tech industries. The Russians would quickly become the Motel 6 of the private prison industry—the feared low-cost provider.

On the other side of the ledger, lower taxes at home would permit additional purchases of luxury goods, such as imported vodka, caviar, and sable coats. Some American consumers might buy Russian to express their solidarity with this venture in international cooperation. Empty correctional facilities would be recycled into theme parks, tourist attractions, or budget motels where former employees could have less stressful positions. That the incarcerated felon community was at least 6,000 miles away would also mean that we would have little to fear from weekend release programs or an occasional escapee. United States judges, thanks to the Russian postal service, would be spared the frivolous appeals endlessly offered up by jailhouse lawyers. Meanwhile, criminal lawyers would be gone weeks at a time to see their clients, not a trivial consideration in the needed reform of our legal system. Some may never return given the hardships of travel to remote gulags and of dealings with those lacking a respect for fine legal argument.

This "Felon Exchange Program" is only the first step in utilizing our former enemy's special expertise. Thou-

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sands of unemployed and underemployed ex-Soviet officials could also be sent to the United States as mentors and role models to hard-pressed local police departments and district attorneys. This equivalent of the Peace Corps, perhaps called the Lavrenti Beria Memorial People-to-People Program, would provide fresh ideas in such areas as gaining confessions from reluctant prisoners, infiltrating the criminal community, keeping comprehensive records on potential troublemakers, making correctional facilities economically self-supporting, and organizing trials for the maximum public impact. By American standards these advisors would receive modest wages, but they would surely send part of their paychecks back to the Motherland, providing further financial help to our new friend. Moreover, given the material benefits of American life, plus the knowledge that they were helping their homeland's economy by fulfilling 125 percent of their prisoner quota, these rent-an-Ivans would invigorate American law enforcement. We can only imagine the fear among antisocial elements when they hear "The Russians are coming, the Russians are coming!" The prospect of confronting police officers unschooled in the American system of criminal rights and unable to speak English could frighten into retirement many urban predators. Mere talk of Comrade Ivan riding into town, à la Clint Eastwood, might restore law and order (Hollywood would surely jump at the opportunity to make films with titles such as *A Fistful of Rubles*).

Contributions could also be made to our problems of large-scale unruliness and breakdown of public order. As the fallout from the Los Angeles riots over the Rodney King verdict reveal, we are fairly inept at maintaining civil society under difficult conditions. Nor are we skilled at preserving harmony among antagonistic but physically close groups. Fortunately, as recent turmoil in Eastern Europe shows, ex-Soviet officials possess an underappreciated knack for keeping the peace in potentially explosive societies. This expertise should be employed before it atrophies. We could rent former KGB special state security units at bargain-basement rates. For a fraction of the cost of mobilizing the National Guard or paying police overtime, we efficiently solve our own problems while helping a friend.

United States public officials would

gladly pay thousands to attend conflict management seminars and workshops offered by ex-commissars with long experience in places such as East Germany, Poland, and the Asian republics. Guided educational tours, a great financial windfall for isolated, unattractive Russian localities, could also be offered. One can already envision Intertourist marketing "Ten Relocation Centers in Ten Days With Exciting On-Your-Own Side Trips" at the yearly conclaves of public officials. Big-city mayors nervous about upcoming long hot summers could gain valuable "hands-on" job training from their counterparts who "got the job done" when domestic discord struck Armenia, the Ukraine, or Georgia. The cost of such helping-hand exchanges and trips, while a boon for the former Soviet Union, are minuscule compared to the cost of a mismanaged urban disturbance.

There are also handsome psychological dividends, an infusion of collective self-esteem, for our demoralized former enemy. Imagine the pride of Moscovites upon seeing on TV advanced elements of the Red Army providing fraternal assistance at the request of local authorities to restore law and order in a riot-torn Philadelphia. Streets jammed with hundreds of Korean and Indian shopkeepers displaying their eternal friendship by waving little red flags while others hold homemade banners thanking their liberators. Pictures in *Pravda* of elderly shut-ins and children venturing into public parks for the first time in years under the vigilant gaze of their newfound protectors. Former Russian military leaders could again feel the traditional pride, as well as the financial benefits, of putting down ethnic unrest and crushing unruly elements. Equally important, Soviet troops stationed in Newark, Oakland, Detroit, and other potential trouble spots are no threat to Russian democracy.

All in all, it should be obvious that our former enemy has something of great value to us. The problem of helping the former Soviet Union is financially and politically solvable. A ten or fifteen billion-dollar transfer may seem enormous by the yardsticks of foreign aid, but it is minor by the standards of criminal justice. We would be contracting out much of our police work to somebody who can do the job better for perhaps a tenth of the price. A perfect example of Ricardo's Law in action. We also would be building democracy and

capitalism while getting something in return. There would be no stigma of charity, no charade over long-term loans never to be repaid, and no whining about helping foreigners while Americans go hungry. The whole operation is straight business: we get security while the Russians get to live better and feel useful. We simply export our great surplus commodity—criminals—to the one society whose economy can benefit from this exchange.

Robert Weissberg is a professor of political science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Saving the Small Farm

by Katherine Dalton

Community Supported Agriculture

St. Matthews Episcopal is a modern, manicured church set in the heart of suburban Louisville's East End. It contrasts somewhat with the dusty farm truck sitting in its parking lot.

Near the truck, half a dozen people say hello to a slender man in blue jeans and then mill around numerous apple crates filled with vegetables and melons. They chat among themselves and fill a bag with their share of produce. The amounts they can take are listed on cards attached to each crate: "8 large or 12 small" above the potatoes, "small handful" on the New Zealand spinach. It's 7:30 on a Thursday night in August, delivery time for Steve Smith's food guild.

Food guilds, subscription farming, community supported agriculture, or CSA—all are names for the kind of farming Steve does. A former market gardener who grew melons and tomatoes for stores and restaurants, Steve now sells a wide variety of vegetables, herbs, and some fruit directly to 79 families. His subscribers buy a share in a season's crop and pay their money up front in the early spring. From late April to mid-December they receive an average of a half-bushel of vegetables per week, all organically grown on Steve's farm in

Bedford, Kentucky, about 40 minutes east of Louisville. Today his customers will take home cucumbers, a small watermelon, zucchini, potatoes, chard, corn, onions, basil, spinach, tomatoes, and either peppers or an eggplant.

Nancy Toole has been one of Steve's subscribers for three of the four years he's run his food guild. She indicates that someone looking for organically grown produce in Louisville would be hard put to find very much of it. (There is a food coop downtown, and a natural food store with two East End locations, but their produce selection is limited.) Besides, she says, she likes "having a connection with the person who grows your vegetables. You don't feel that when you shop at a grocery store. And we all like Steve so much."

An hour's drive to the north, Lynne Dickey and her family live on a 106-acre farm near Salem, Indiana. Her place was once an Amish homestead and a you-pick blueberry farm. She still enjoys the blueberries, and Amish still live in the neighborhood—I pass two of their children on the road, who wave as I drive by.

This is Lynne's second year of organic subscription farming. She started slowly with five customers in 1992—"people I knew and who were willing to support me," she says—and grew to 16 families this summer, customers she found through word of mouth. Lynne delivers twice a week: to families in New Albany, Indiana, and Louisville on Tuesdays, and to others in Salem and nearby Madison on Fridays. She differs from Steve in that she offers home delivery of a 48-quart cooler's worth of vegetables and fruit. Pointing to a row of white half-runner beans, she adds that she'll grow to order any variety a customer requests.

Lynne charges half her money up front in the spring, and that buys her seeds, soil amendments, and supplies for the greenhouse. Her second payment in July is really "my pay," she says, and it gives her a mid-season psychological boost. For Lynne, one of the biggest advantages of CSA is that she receives money up front, right when her costs are greatest. She likes not having to go into debt, growing a crop that's already sold, and having personal contact with her customers. For her, CSA has no downside.

"I know how many people I'm growing for, and I know how much land I'll

need to grow for a certain amount of people, so there's no waste," Lynne says. In years past she grew market crops that may or may not have sold, just a few varieties that had to be picked all at once and had to be sold as soon as they were picked. "It's security, being able to have people invest for the season. I really appreciate being able to grow for people like this."

The concept of community supported farming in this country is generally credited to Jan Vander Tuin, a Vermonter who in the early 80's came across community supported farms in Switzerland and who founded a cooperative of his own near Zurich soon thereafter. Back in the United States, Vander Tuin spread the word, and in 1985 a group including John Root, Jr., Robyn Van En, Charlotte Zaneccchia, and Hugh Ratcliffe sold 30 shares in an apple orchard in western Massachusetts. That next spring they leased land from Van En and broke ground for vegetables, selling shares to 50 families in the area.

According to Van En, between 200 and 400 CSA farms exist today from New England to Texas to the West Coast. (Her estimate may be low; a Kentucky CSA conference held last winter drew 67 people.) Around the country these community farms are organized along various lines. Some share land among group members and offer produce on a take-as-you-need basis to the community, including poor families who can't support the farm cooperative financially. Others offer a set range of share prices to shareholders and ask them to contribute based on their ability to pay. Many groups, like Steve's, meet yearly to discuss the season and the budget. But they all share the same personal link between farmer and consumer, between locally grown food and its market, that is the core of the CSA idea.

Some see community supported agriculture as a potential saviour of the small farm. With its emphasis on organic soil enrichment, marketing without a middleman, and selling locally grown produce to a nearby market, CSA offers the small grower a simpler alternative to traditional agriculture, with its dependence on heavy machinery and chemicals. CSA farms require little land; Steve believes he could feed 100 families on the approximately four acres he cultivates for vegetables. Capital expenditures are low because large vegetable gardens do not require large pieces of equipment.

Eliot Coleman, whose *The New Organic Grower* is a comprehensive guidebook for CSA farmers, estimates that a farmer initially needs about \$6,000 for tools and a rototiller. Compare that to the \$14,000 you can easily spend on a reconditioned tractor.

In this area at least, the cost to CSA shareholders is also low. This year Steve's guild ran \$385 for 35 weeks or \$11 a week for a half-bushel of produce. Lynne Dickey charged \$285 for 20 weeks, or \$14.25 a week, for a large cooler delivered to the home. Both farmers offer varieties (of lettuce and corn especially) that you cannot buy in a grocery store, which makes it hard to compare prices. But even a rough comparison shows that week to week they are selling at or below supermarket prices—and their food is locally grown, fresh, and free of pesticides.

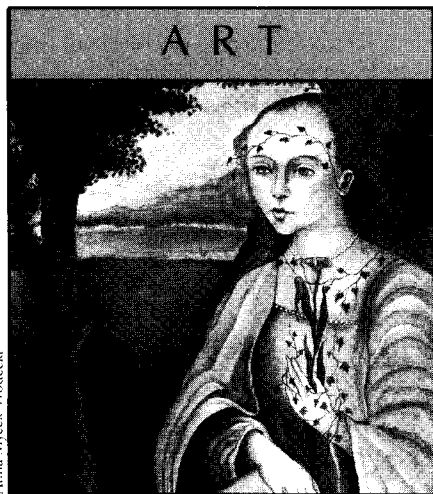
Steve bases his subscription fee not on market prices but on what it costs him to grow his vegetables. He actually publishes his budget, from seeds to insurance to manure. Last year his expenses ran to a little under \$10,000, half of that for part-time help, leaving him an income for his own labor and land use of \$19,000. That's not a princely sum by city standards, but it's a livable income, and Steve supplements it with tobacco and cattle.

As he spends 50-60 hours per week during the spring and summer on his vegetables alone, Steve works very hard for what he earns. But then farming has always been a low-paying job. Its benefits are not monetary, though they are no less important: independence, self-sufficiency, and for organic growers, the satisfaction that comes from improving the soil. Steve is the third generation of Smiths to farm this valley. Sure, he says, at times he's thought of doing something else. "But I always wanted to farm," he says and grins.

As the government reduces the amount of tobacco farmers are allowed to grow and sell, traditional farmers in Kentucky who depend on tobacco for a significant part of their livelihood will have to find a way to replace that income. Steve is encouraging them to consider some kind of community supported vegetable growing. Organic farming is not as foreign a concept as it used to be, and Steve says this year alone he's had a number of traditional farmers drop by to see what he does. "I was a traditional farmer, as traditional as you can

get," he says, which leads him to believe others can be convinced to change. The best argument he has is his own success.

Katherine Dalton writes from Louisville, Kentucky.



Anna Myczek-Wodnicki

Sacred Encounters

by Rachel Heise and
Daniel James Sundahl

R.H. Ives Gammell and Francis Thompson

"Time," R.H. Ives Gammell wrote in *The Twilight of Painting*, "is a ruthless appraiser of art and, by and large, a very just one." Gammell addressed his book "to readers disposed to consider the complete deterioration of the older forms of painting a disaster to civilization." When he published *The Twilight* in 1946, Gammell's purpose was not to attack any method or school of painting then in vogue; he believed, however, that a large number of art lovers felt uneasy about the kind of painting "encouraged by our art museums and fostered in our art schools."

"As a matter of record," Gammell wrote in the conclusion to *The Twilight*, "I will state here that all the trained painters I have known, several of whom were considered leaders in their profession a short quarter of a century ago, have been unanimous in their estimate of critical opinions emanating from the-

orists, amateurs, and incompetent artists." Theory, Gammell believed, was outstripping performance, and the traditional art of painting with long established standards had fallen to a level that has had no parallel in the civilized world for several centuries. No one "ever envisaged a criticism at once as ignorant and as self-assured as that dispensed by the art writers attached to our newspapers and periodicals." For great art is not acquired intuitively nor do fine pictures just paint themselves. "There will not be good painting until we once more have among us talented men who also know how to paint."

The 1993/1994 Fine Arts Season at Hillsdale College's Sage Center began with an impressive exhibition celebrating Gammell's achievement, especially the work that most embodied his personal criterion. The Daughtrey Gallery premiered the International Tour of R.H. Ives Gammell's pictorial sequence of Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven," whose imagery focused Gammell's own visionary experiences and provoked him into the largest undertaking of his career. The exhibition is held in conjunction with an academic residency by Professor Brigid M. Boardman, author of *Between Heaven and Charing Cross: The Life of Francis Thompson*. The exhibition also features auxiliary material from both Gammell and Thompson. The poem and the cycle of paintings (numbering 23 in all, oil on canvas) embody the theme of man's pursuit of the infinite, or in Thompson's terms, the pursuit by God of the soul in flight.

A retired M.D. we know, a devout Roman Catholic, can still recite by heart Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven." A Calvinist minister we know, living in Arkansas, ministering to a small Ozark Mountains church, can also recite the poem by heart. These are two persons living apart from colleges and universities, also a generation apart from one another if not religiously apart, who share in the hidden lives of their hearts the power of a great poem:

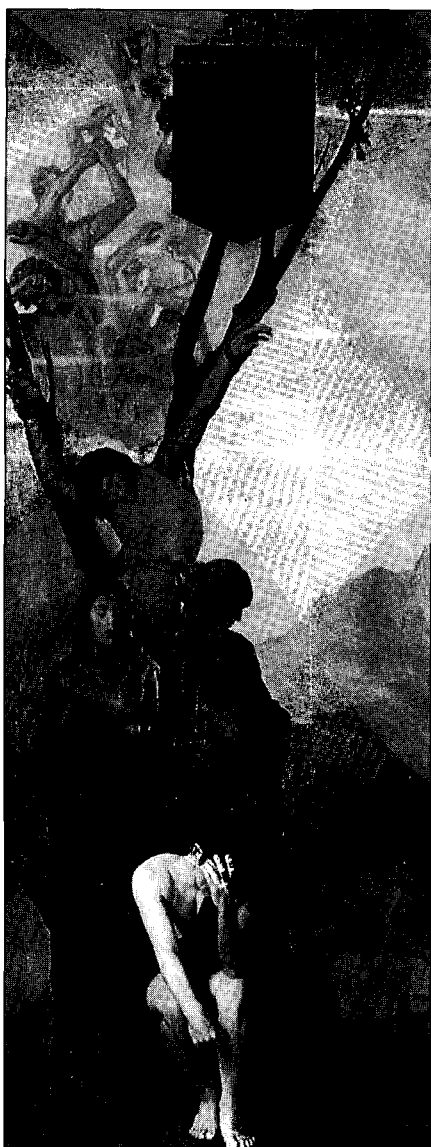
I fled Him, down the nights and
down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the
years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine
ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist
of tears

I hid from Him, and under
running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of
chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that
followed, followed after.

Last year was the centenary of the publication of Francis Thompson's *Poems*. The centerpiece to that collection is "The Hound of Heaven," an allegorical, liturgical poem that portrays the stripped soul of Everyman who seeks and finds a home in eternity, as Brigid M. Boardman writes in her biography of Francis Thompson. The years from 1888 to 1894 were Thompson's period of poetic productivity. In the four chapters covering those years, Professor Boardman shows that the "liturgy was even now being woven into the pattern of his poetic ideas." She sees "his main fault to be the tendency to excess which he never succeeded in bringing under full control . . . a potentially fine passage can deteriorate into needless obscurity or empty rhetoric."

Still, the writing is anything but stock religious poetry. "The Hound of Heaven" unites the personal with the universal, Thompson drawing from childhood memories of his service as an altar boy, his nomadic life on the London streets, his illness, and his pain. The self-revelation and self-acceptance in the poem, however, build on a "mythological undercurrent" containing "echoes of the Scriptures and Fathers of the Church . . . to the no less distinct voice of Augustine."

Last year was also the centenary of the birth of R.H. Ives Gammell, whose *The Boston Painters*, *Nineteen Hundred to Nineteen Thirty* and *The Twilight of Painting* defended an older standard of execution, one that demanded thorough and comprehensive professional training. Gammell first read Thompson's poem in 1911, and it provoked and focused his imagination. During the 1930's, Gammell planned a cycle of paintings freely based on Thompson's poem, but the project never materialized due to Gammell's nervous breakdown and depleted creative energies. Gammell suggests, in the foreword to the 1956 catalog of "The Hound of Heaven" cycle, that for years he had been unable to find the proper imagery to convey the ideas he found in Thomp-



R. H. Ives Gammell

son's poem. "Eventually I decided that it would involve only a slight change in terminology to consider 'The Hound of Heaven' as a history of the experience commonly called emotional breakdown rather than as the story of a specifically religious conversion." He was unwilling to traduce what he believed was Thompson's intention, but this interpretation "brought within range a quantity of pictorial ideas which had haunted my thoughts for many years but for which I had never found a connecting link capable of giving them artistic unity."

For Gammell, the link was provided by C.G. Jung's *The Psychology of the Unconscious*. Jung's demonstration of the close relationship among myths, symbols, poetic imagery, and "the perpetually recurring emotional patterns of human life from which they evolved"

enabled Gammell to relate his pictorial conceptions of the poem that he had stored in files and to begin "The Hound of Heaven" cycle. In all there are some 12 folders directly related to the paintings, which Gammell used during the nearly 12 years he worked on the sequence.

The fourth painting in the cycle, for example, as it appears in the 1956 catalog, is printed opposite some of the file-folder materials. The page begins with a phrase from Thompson's "Hound": "I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways / Of my own mind." Gammell follows the Thompson passage, which may serve as a title to the painting, with touchstone passages from Jung's *The Psychology of the Unconscious* and *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* as well as from Aeschylus, Shakespeare, and Shelley. In most cases, the contents of the touchstones can be identified with ideas and themes in the paintings to which they refer. The 20th painting in the sequence takes its title from Thompson's phrase "Rise, clasp / My hand, and come!" Gammell's corresponding file folder contains passages from Eliot, Baudelaire, Wagner, and, again, from Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*: "At this time, when the sun has set, when love is apparently dead, man awaits in mysterious joy the renewal of all life."

All of this is in the tradition of classical realism, and a far remove from the avant-garde. Gammell's conservative position, in opposition to the multitudinous glitter of modernism, "embodies," as Richard Lack writes, "a reverence for tradition, a resistance to wanton and senseless destruction of past accomplishments, and the carrying forward of hard won achievements and noble endeavors that characterize the best of any civilization." By temperament, Gammell was not an impressionist but belongs rather to that broad class of painters who draw their inspiration from literature, history, philosophy, theology, psychology, symbol, and myth.

When Gammell died in 1981 at the age of 88, he had painted for nearly 70 years, mostly as a spectral figure whose ideals, attitudes, and objectives were in stark contrast to the "modern art" establishment. It is not difficult to conceive that isolation was as much a "heart-perturbing thing" for Gammell as was the "sad and doubtful questioning" of Francis Thompson.

On Sunday, September 5 at 7:30 p.m.,

the Sage Center for the Performing Arts officially inaugurated the R.H. Ives Gammell tour. The program in the Sage Center's Markel Auditorium included a special performance of Professor Ralph von Sydow's musical adaptation of Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven," followed by the first of Professor Boardman's lectures: "The Hound of Heaven: The Poem and the Poet/The Paintings and the Painter." The Daughtrey Gallery is open to the public weekdays, 8:00-4:00; Saturday, 10:00-5:00; Sunday, 12:00-5:00. Additional information can be had by calling Daniel James Sundahl, 516-437-7341, extension 2443.

Rachel Heise is a junior at Hillsdale College. Daniel James Sundahl is a professor of English and the director of Hillsdale's American studies program.



R. H. Ives Gammell

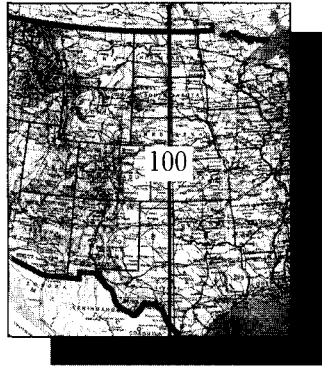
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Out Where the West Began

Flying home from the East, I usually honor crossing the Mississippi as the occasion for my first double dry martini, which means that passing the Hundredth Meridian, equidistant between the towns of Kearney and North Platte, Nebraska, is generally the cause for celebrating with the second. For at least a century and a half, the Hundredth has been the line of demarcation between the Eastern and Western portions of the United States, the meteorological instant at which the polite old East expires and the Wild West lunges forward. In the days of prop and turbo-prop planes, the Hundredth also coincided roughly with the start of the perceptible upward sweep of the continent, climaxing in an orogenic burst of snowy granite as the aircraft bumped and scraped over the ragged Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. Experienced at ground level, the geographical transition from East to West is less dramatic, essentially a matter of increasing aridity rather than of elevational rise. Still, somewhere east of Scottsbluff the Nebraskan Sandhills provide enough lift that the native Westerner, taking note of the depleted ozone, thinning air, snow squalls (in June), and—especially—the ubiquitous odoriferous sagebrush, long before he catches sight of Chimney Rock above the North Platte River perceives that he is almost home again.

On a morning flight last fall from Salt Lake City to Chicago, the view off the left wing over Evanston, Wyoming, included the Wasatch Mountains of northern Utah, Bear Lake straddling the Utah-Idaho line, the Wyoming and Salt River Ranges north of my hometown of Kemmerer (Wyoming), the Grand Tetons more than 200 miles to the north, the Green River Basin, the Wind River Mountains, and beyond them to the north and east the Absaroka Mountains on the southeastern boundary of Yellowstone Park and the Owl Creek Mountains that form the southwestern rim of the Bighorn Basin. In spite of acrid ochreous smogs drifting from Los Angeles and Salt Lake, the copper smelters of Arizona, and the electric power plants at



Page (Arizona), Four Corners, and Colstrip, Montana, you can still see nearly forever in the Great American West. More important even than what you do see, however, is what you don't. From 30,000 feet, every human construction is recognizable: every town, every mine, every reservoir, every highway—even many of the dirt roads. Why? Because there are so few of all these things, comparatively speaking. With no trouble at all, I can trace the central public road system on a blank map of the state of Wyoming, which at the close of the 20th century remains substantially undeveloped, and therefore substantially open, and for that reason substantially free.

The low population density of the Rocky Mountain states and Nevada, and the relative insignificance of industrial "improvements" made by human beings to the region, emphasize what never needed emphasis to begin with: namely, the titanic heroic landforms of which it consists. Often when contemplating a trip—400, 800, 1,000 miles—I catch my mind's eye drifting down the highway ahead of me like a space probe, snapping and transmitting familiar images of every salient geologic and geographic feature between, say, Kemmerer and El Paso, a distance of exactly 1010 miles. The plains of western Wyoming . . . the Wasatch Front . . . Soldier Summit . . . the Roan Cliffs . . . the Book Cliffs . . . the LaSal Mountains . . . Ute Mountain and Mesa Verde . . . the Nacimiento Mountains . . . the Sandias behind Albuquerque . . . the Jornada del Muerto . . . Elephant Butte . . . the Black Range . . . the Organ Pipe Mountains . . . El Christo Rey above The Pass itself. The Mountain West is of a boldly discernible piece, the Colorado Plateau merging logically with the West Slope of Colorado,

the Mogollon Rim in Arizona forming a plausible transition between the northern Sonoran Desert and the aforementioned Plateau, the Basin and Range formations of the Great American Desert advancing with discreet precision from eastern Utah to eastern California. Writing this, I seem to be standing in a darkened room gazing down at a lighted relief map of the entire Rocky Mountain West spread at my feet.

Such ease of conception leads to love, and love to jealousy—an emotion as defensible, even admirable, when its object is the land as it is indefensible where persons are concerned. "My home," Edward Abbey wrote, "is the American West. All of it." So is it mine, but it makes an awfully big home to love—and to defend. And the West today is in critical need of defense as extra-regional forces, eager as well as resentful ones, gather for a final assault that is part the ultimate land grab, part a process of gentrification, part an assertion of the new Manifest Destiny—also known as Modernization.

Among the most effective rhetorical sleights-of-hand in history is the conflation of the antonyms "progress" and "modernization," a trick that has depended for its success upon a cynical appeal to all men, religious and secular, who have believed that *Homo sapiens* is somehow called to create a civilization increasingly more just, wise, sensitive, intelligent, and reflective of his truest nature. That these words are not synonymous is suggested by the fact that while the Kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus Christ was manifestly an improvement over every society to date, including that of the ancient Hebrews, 2,000 years of subsequent modernization not only have failed to institutionalize it, but have instead produced societies even more decadent than the ancient Roman Empire that God's Kingdom was meant to supplant.

In somewhat of a reverse parallel, the American West, thoroughly Americanized in the middle and late 19th century, has not since been modernized except in such un-Western outposts and oases of modernity as Las Vegas, Vail, and Lake Tahoe. For approximately a century after the American frontier was declared offi-

cially closed, life in the Rocky Mountain states persisted as essentially a frontier culture without the rest of the country being aware of this until a couple of decades ago, when the emergent environmentalist movement took notice of the fact and decided the time had arrived to close out what remained of the frontier for good and all. Since the early 70's, environmentalists looking to return the West to unworked wilderness have joined forces with transplanted urbanites seeking to gentrify it, while environmentalism and urbanization, as impersonal forces, have created conditions in which the old Western ruralism based on ranching, agriculture, mining, and timbering may be destroyed. Contributing mightily to the process of change is the current exodus, beginning almost overnight, from the nation's greatest non-Western—in particular Far Western—cities, caused by what can fairly be described as the collapse of a once great civilization (our own). While the refugees tend to flee, as if by instinct,

to the hinterland, their destination is usually the urban, not the rural, West, which at first thought seems like a blessing. So long as the majority of these Conestoga Californians, Texans, Washingtonians, and Connecticut Yankees pen themselves in glittering ghettos, why worry about them? One answer is water, the West's scarcest resource. Another is that the newcomers, urbanites all, regard the hundreds of thousands of square miles surrounding these cities as their rightful playground and preserve.

This is the real story behind current headlines having to do with grazing and mining reforms, with the demand for more wilderness closures, with the hoopla emanating from the Bureau of Reclamation that promises an end to the era of dam-building and similar grandiose projects and the start of a new age of "quality water management," by which is meant cutting off the supply of water to ranchers and irrigation farmers and diverting it instead to the misplaced lawn-growers of Phoenix, Albuquerque,

and Denver. From all around the country, the baby-boomers are arriving on the Western scene (if only for a few weeks' vacation each year), looking around, and declaring: "We like it here!" And the chief of all baby boomers in his Big White Teepee in Washington, Dec Cee is set to deliver it to them. After all, they have the votes. And the money.

Owing to its vastness and still relatively small population, the Rocky Mountain West is preeminently the sole portion of the United States (Alaska perhaps excluded) that remains American, as opposed to Modern. It was in part to retain this quality of being American that the South fought the Civil War—and lost. In defeat, it suffered the accelerated imposition of 100 Percent Modernism, so that by the 1950's it had become more even than its own unrecognizable descendant: a travesty rather, a caricature of the rationalist utilitarian colossus that had conquered it. A similar fate may well overtake the West unless present trends are substantially alleviated or reversed. A decade and a half ago, the rebel yells of the Sagebrush protesters had the slightly cracked tone of secessionism, but the Sagebrush Rebellion has come to nothing, for the time being at least when the native sons of the West will be hard pressed to hang onto the tenuous ground they now occupy. Meanwhile, Westerners continue to survive in the only portion of the Lower Forty-Eight where wilderness, official or not, is the absolute condition of human life rather than a scenic backdrop to a pale facsimile of it; where the weather, day in and day out (not just in hurricane season), is a matter of life and death; where man's relationship to animate nature is the true and primeval one of kill or be killed; where men—and women—go routinely armed; and where, consequently, the old American dream of freedom survives. For these reasons, issues affecting the future of the West are and ought to be of vital interest to all Americans, who may one day stand to benefit from Western intransigence in what seems more and more to be end times for the country as a whole.

It is ironic that the apostle of the New Nationalism, Teddy Roosevelt, should have described the West, admiringly, as a place where "you can still plug a man in the belly and get away with it." But why not? Better a society where bad men go free than one in which decent men and patriots go to jail. c

LIBERAL ARTS

AFROCENTRIC SHYSTERS

Proponents of Washington, D.C.'s experiment in Afrocentric education in the public schools have termed media criticism "a racist attack" by "white supremacists." In an hour-long presentation sponsored by the D.C. school system at Ruth K. Webb Elementary School last September, 10 of 11 speakers assailed the *Washington Post* for its coverage of the new program. "It's been an avalanche of blatant distortion and outright lies," said Kwaku Walker, the husband of program director Abena Walker. "We have to correct the miseducation of our youth and guard against white supremacy and white chauvinism . . . so that they can see the white chauvinistic orientation of the *Washington Post*."

The new Afrocentric program involves 130 children from the Trinidad neighborhood of Northeast Washington, reports the *Post*. Supporters of the program argue that it will greatly benefit these children by infusing African culture and history into their lessons. They are not bothered by the fact that Abena Walker's credentials include a master's degree that she gave herself from Pan African University, which she founded and which is neither accredited nor licensed. Walker maintains that Pan African University is a "community-based organization, not seeking accreditation from a European-based university. It's accredited to the race."

The D.C. school system has contracted to pay Walker \$44,268 for this fiscal year and has budgeted \$120,000 for consulting fees, books, and supplies like sewing machines, cameras, and television sets. Though Walker had neglected to select or order textbooks for this school year by the end of September, a parent of two children in the Webb program (and a student at Walker's university) seemed unconcerned. "We love this unaccredited, unlicensed school," Belinda Sheppard said. "I was ecstatic to learn that this program would be opening . . . for my children to see the world through African eyes."

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